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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 31 October 2016

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 31 octobre 2016

Standing Committee on
Social Policy

Comité permanent de
la politique sociale

Service clubs

Clubs philanthropiques



Chair: Peter Tabuns
Clerk: Katch Koch

Président : Peter Tabuns
Greffier : Katch Koch

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
SOCIAL POLICYCOMITÉ PERMANENT DE
LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE

Monday 31 October 2016

Lundi 31 octobre 2016

The committee met at 1401 in room 151.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Good afternoon, committee members. I'm calling this meeting to order for the public hearings on the legislative and regulatory barriers and burdens facing service clubs in Ontario.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We first need the report from the subcommittee. Mr. Fraser?

Mr. John Fraser: I move the Standing Committee on Social Policy report of the subcommittee.

Your subcommittee on committee business met on Thursday, September 29, 2016, to consider the method of proceeding for the public hearings on the legislative and regulatory barriers and burdens facing service clubs in Ontario, and recommends the following:

(1) That the committee meet in Toronto on Monday, October 31, 2016, for the purpose of holding public hearings.

(2) That the Clerk of the Committee post information regarding public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and on Canada NewsWire.

(3) That the deadline for requests to appear be 12 noon on Monday, October 24, 2016.

(4) That the Clerk be authorized to schedule the witnesses if all requests can be accommodated.

(5) That should the hearings be oversubscribed, the Clerk of the Committee provide a list of all interested presenters to the subcommittee following the deadline for requests.

(6) That each caucus provide their selections of witnesses based on the list of interested presenters received from the Clerk of the Committee by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 25, 2016.

(7) That all witnesses be offered five minutes for presentation and nine minutes for questioning by committee members, or three minutes per caucus.

(8) That the deadline for written submissions be 6 p.m. on Monday, October 31, 2016.

(9) That the research officer provide a summary of oral presentations and written submissions to the committee following the public hearings.

(10) That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the Chair, be authorized prior to the adoption of the report of the subcommittee to commence making any

preliminary arrangements necessary to facilitate the committee's proceedings.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Is there any discussion on the report? There being none, all those in favour of adoption of the report? Opposed? It is carried.

SERVICE CLUBS

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We'll go on to our first witness: Bryn Styles, past director, Rotary International.

Mr. Styles, you have five minutes to speak. If you'd start by introducing yourself for Hansard, we'll go from there. Then we'll have questions from all three parties.

Mr. Bryn Styles: Mr. Chair, committee members and staff, I'd like to thank you for convening this meeting and giving me and all the other participants here an opportunity to express our views. What you see, I think, before you with the people represented are those who are passionate about the service work that we do, and who want to make it even more impactful.

My name is Bryn Styles. I'm from Barrie, Ontario. I'm a past director of Rotary International and a current trustee of the Rotary Foundation.

I think most of you in this room—and I know that there's even a Rotary member here, at least one—are familiar with Rotarians and Rotary Clubs in your own communities, and I'm sure that all of you have had the opportunity to speak to clubs in your own towns and cities.

Rotary International is the largest service organization in the world, with over 1.2 million members in 35,000 clubs, in about 200 countries and territories. But as much as we're an international organization, we're also very much a community-based service organization, serving our towns and municipalities across our great province of Ontario.

It was hard to find actual data on how many Rotarians are in Ontario because Rotary doesn't keep statistics like that, but working it out, I would guesstimate that there are between 8,500 and 9,000 Rotarians in Ontario and approximately 250 Rotary clubs.

All service clubs, be it Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions or Kinsmen, are vital to the health of our communities.

Strong communities have strong organizations. I believe that service organizations are more vital to our communities now than ever in the past. Governments at all levels, federal, provincial and municipal, no longer have enough funds to meet the demands that the public makes. They're depending more and more on private enterprise and civic organizations to keep our communities healthy, and I think a perfect example of this is health care. While the provincial government will fund construction of a hospital, the purchasing of equipment and extra services for a hospital falls to the community.

In my own community of Barrie, the three local Rotary Clubs raised and donated over \$1.2 million to the construction and equipping of the new hospital and the cancer centre that went with it. We are now in the process of funding new cardio equipment and a child mental health services program—again, raising funds. At the same time, we are helping to fund hospices, cancer support centres, libraries and YMCAs.

Municipal governments are constantly asking service clubs to help with recreational facilities, parks and paths, and to do all of these things we need to find funds. With restrictions that are in place from all levels of government—in many cases, unintentional restrictions—it is getting more and more difficult for us to raise the funds and to do the work that we think needs to be done.

But raising funds is only part of what we do. Many of our Rotarians in our clubs spend hours and hours doing the actual projects. Rotarians come with many skill sets and devote their professional and avocational talents to a variety of projects within our community. Constructing paths, buildings and bridges takes hands-on work or, as we call it, sweat equity.

Rotary International itself has been trying to find out how many hours Rotarians donate annually to their communities, and the numbers are staggering. To try and put a dollar value on those hours is almost impossible but it's estimated to be in the billions and billions of dollars—to put a dollar value on it.

Rotary clubs also spend a large amount of effort in working with our youth and young adults. We have Interact clubs for teenagers to teach them the importance of community service. We have clubs for young adults in post-secondary institutions or who have just joined the workforce, teaching them the value of community service and also acting as mentors for them.

Service clubs need help to be even more effective. My fellow Rotarians who are here today will each be presenting on some different aspects of the concerns that we have with respect to provincial regulations, but also some crossover regulations that affect both federal and municipal. Canadian Rotarians have developed a very strong relationship with the federal government on a variety of issues, and I look forward to developing the same relationship with the province of Ontario. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much. We go first to the opposition. Mr. Wilson?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Thanks very much, Bryn, for coming down from Barrie. As you know, we're happy to

hear from the other Rotarians who I guess will be a little more specific in terms of the burdens. Is there anything, though, while you have the floor, that you'd like to add to that?

Mr. Bryn Styles: Not specifically. As with any good group, we actually got organized ahead of time and divided up what we feel the issues are, so you won't be hearing repetition from each one; it will be each one talking about specific issues. They've researched into that.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Wow, that's the best organized we've ever seen. We're actually speechless over here.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I guess I just wanted to mention that I represent Thornhill and I joke that, until I got elected, I didn't realize that pretty much every household in Thornhill is involved in some kind of charity work. It's a little overwhelming for me, sometimes, and I've gotten to the point where I have to keep a schedule of whose events I go to so I don't go to two of one group's and then not somebody else's the next year.

I would just ask if you have anything to say that we can do on the non-legislative side of things to support the great work that you're doing, to help promote on social media and things like that. You don't have to talk about it, but just to let you be aware that we're really happy when we can help promote the good work that you're doing.

Mr. Bryn Styles: That's a really good point. To be maybe a little blunt, we see a lot of the members of Parliament or MPPs during elections and they all give great lip service to the work that service clubs do, but after elections we maybe don't see them as much anymore. If you could arrange with your local organizations—Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions—to come to speak to them about some of the issues on a regular basis, annually or something like that, I think that would really help, so that there's a connection rather than just every four years.

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Mrs. Gila Martow: Yes, absolutely. On a personal note, I can't wait until there's an election or I won't get to everybody.

I would really encourage everybody—and, again, to say to you that we do get statement times. I know my colleague Mr. Wilson uses his statement to talk very often about the different clubs in his riding. I would encourage all the members to do that to promote the fundraising efforts and the good work you're doing. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): With that, we go to the third party. Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you, sir, for being here. Thank you for your presentation. You touched on the point that now, more than ever, we need service clubs. You gave the example of hospital fundraising. I agree with you: I think it's very important. Any other examples that you can touch on?

Mr. Bryn Styles: I'll try not to be partisan in this. I think a lot of things have been downloaded from the

provincial to the municipal, and when the municipal couldn't handle it, they started to look within their communities. There are a lot of different things—municipal now comes to service organizations when they want a new splash pad, when they want this thing within their own communities. We get stretched pretty thin.

I know a few years ago when Barrie was doing the new big hospital, they were taking a lot of money from the community, but then we also had Hospice Simcoe, Gilda's Club, the YMCA and the library all looking for funds at the same time because they're just not available anymore.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I think that was really insightful, that though we need service clubs now more than ever, some of the reason for that is actually very troubling—the fact that there have been a lot of downloads.

Thank you for your continued service. I appreciate it.

Mr. Bryn Styles: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Singh. We go to the government: Mr. Dhillon.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: In your presentation you stated that there are some unintended restrictions posed by government. Could you elaborate on that? I'd be interested in hearing—

Mr. Bryn Styles: Right. Like anything—and I think we're all familiar with it—sometimes legislation gets passed where the ramifications aren't known immediately on how it's going to affect us. It wasn't intentional that this happened, but over time—and some of my colleagues will be speaking to this—certain things happen that have a negative effect that wasn't intended in the original legislation.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: The membership in service clubs has been very popular and it's been increasing worldwide. Could you tell us about some of your thoughts on the advantages of service clubs over maybe some other not-for-profit organizations?

Mr. Bryn Styles: That's an interesting question. I know one of my colleagues is going to speak on it very briefly, but service clubs are more than just going out and raising funds. It's a sense of fellowship that you have. I know Mr. Coe is a member of Rotary, he indicated. You develop a relationship within the community. You learn more of what's happening in the community when you belong to service clubs because you're in touch with—people who belong to Rotary or Kiwanis are usually involved in other areas as well, as opposed to maybe a specific not-for-profit.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: To my colleague.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Yes, Mr. Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much for appearing today and for coming in such an organized fashion. We look forward to all.

The Rotary Club in my riding of Ottawa South helped to build the Rotary Home in the south end of Ottawa, which I was glad to be a part of. It's actually outside of my riding right now.

I look forward to this afternoon, but I want to thank you for all of the work that you're doing around hospice

and palliative care because I know that many service clubs across Ontario are really helping to encourage investment in what is really a community-based initiative. I just want to say thank you for that.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Okay. Thank you very much.

Mr. Bryn Styles: Thank you.

KIWANIS EASTERN CANADA AND CARIBBEAN DISTRICT

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Our next presenter, then, is Allen Ure from Kiwanis Clubs of Eastern Canada.

Allen, if I've mispronounced your name, my apologies right off the top. You've heard the drill: If you can introduce yourself, and then you have five minutes.

Mr. Allen Ure: Thank you. I do want to compliment you on pronouncing the last name correctly.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Oh, my goodness. Anything can happen.

Mr. Allen Ure: I really appreciate that.

Mr. Chair, members of the committee and everyone behind us, I really am thankful for the opportunity to present this afternoon on behalf of Kiwanis of Eastern Canada, in particular. We are a worldwide organization of over 600,000 Kiwanians in 80 countries. We're a global organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the world, one child and one community at a time.

We support various groups of all ages, starting with the cradle. For our Kiwanis year that ended September 30, 2015, worldwide we raised over US\$107 million through 18.5 million volunteer hours.

In Ontario, we are represented by 79 adult clubs and 2,167 members. We also support clubs for what one of my colleagues calls "differently abled" adults, grade-school children, high school and post-secondary school students. We also offer leadership programs for children from 14 to 18. All of these programs are supported solely through fundraising activities by our clubs.

Some of the challenges that we face are the high licensing fees that must be paid to the federal, provincial or municipal governments. The proposal now to require an audit of any fundraising activity that raises over \$50,000 will result in less money available to support our communities in areas where government services are not provided.

I have seen an estimate that the audit of these projects could cost in the range of \$4,500. As an accountant with 49 years of service as a public accountant, I have my fears that this price is a little low. It doesn't seem to be something that I could be satisfied with in a lot of instances. I'm also surprised that anything under \$50,000 could be done by an audit for \$450. The regulations that we have as chartered professional accountants—the paper shuffle is the same. It isn't dictated by the size of the funds that we're looking at.

Kiwanis already has a strong request that all of our clubs have an annual examination of all their financial

information. We also face municipal governments requiring us to submit documentation for all of our licensing requirements.

I'm not sure if the committee is aware that there are three types of financial statement preparation that can be provided, the most expensive of which is an audit. In many cases, that is already being done at the club level. I have this fear that the bottom line would be an awful lot less money for service clubs to put back into their communities. I would ask that the committee consider dropping that audit requirement for service clubs completely.

Kiwanis Clubs worldwide are provided the opportunity to receive relevant training for leadership, membership growth and retention, and financial stewardship already. This education is funded by our annual dues that every member pays to our organization. We do not need the government to put another level of training and education into the mix by people who are not necessarily service-minded.

As it is now, our training sessions are held at conventions or locally on weekends or evenings. We also provide webinars and other online sessions for our members. Most government training sessions end up being held during the workday, and members cannot or should not be required to take a day off work to attend a government training session that would not necessarily be specific to the needs of individual clubs. I believe that would be a waste of taxpayer dollars.

I have heard other organizations suggest that membership dues be allowed as an income tax deduction. While that would be wonderful, unless—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Ure, I'm sorry to say you've run out of the five minutes.

Mr. Allen Ure: That's fine.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We'll go first to the third party. Mr. Singh?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you very much, sir. Please, you can take some of my time to finish what you were saying.

Mr. Allen Ure: All I was going to say is that the implications of making membership fees tax-deductible are that it puts another burden of complexity onto tax returns for individuals and corporations.

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Mr. Jagmeet Singh: So the two components: One is that the requirement for the audit and the cost associated with the audit are troubling to you, and then you've suggested—in your written submission, as well—potentially waiving the provincial portion of the HST.

In terms of accountability and transparency, which is probably why the audit—if you could discuss alternatives to the audit. Do organizations have their own internal audits that are made public, so that this provincial requirement may not be necessary?

Mr. Allen Ure: With any licensing fees that we have, at least in my area of southwestern Ontario, we have to submit the documentation to the licensing organization—whether it's municipal, federal or provincial—already.

So this would be a secondary—you have to do it again with additional costs.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Would there be a way to just submit what you initially submit to the municipality and submit that to the province?

Mr. Allen Ure: I don't see why not.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: And that would solve this problem?

Mr. Allen Ure: I believe so.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That sounds like a good solution.

With respect to waiving the HST, the idea is that the service clubs are providing a service to the community anyway, so providing them with more resources or more money to stay in their pockets so that they can actually do that work in the community is essentially what you're looking to see.

Mr. Allen Ure: That's correct.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Those are all of my questions. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We go to the government. Mr. Dhillon.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Thank you, sir, for bringing your experiences with service clubs to our attention.

Today many service clubs perform charity work and provide community services on a regular basis. Despite these great charitable endeavours, membership numbers have been on the decline. People still enjoy—and try to volunteer in today's world. Volunteerism may be less structured and informal.

Could you inform us of ways that modern service clubs can try to harness this new trend?

Mr. Allen Ure: We have to be adaptable to change the standard view of what a service club—how often they meet and things like that. Besides the Kiwanis Club of Ridgetown, I'm also a member of the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant, which is what we call a 3-2-1 club: three hours of service, two hours of fellowship and one meeting per month, on average. That makes it more attractive to younger people. Younger people do not want to sit in meetings and listen to speakers. In a lot of instances, they can't come to dinner meetings—whether it's lunch or supper. They have young children who have busy schedules. So we meet online. We have several clubs that meet online as well.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I know in particular with younger people, it's more of a problem with the declining membership. Other than meeting online, are there any other strategies that you guys are trying to implement?

Mr. Allen Ure: We think the 3-2-1 club is a great idea. The Paris-Brant club went from five members to 21 in six months due to the different structure.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I very much appreciate the comments you have towards audits and the financial regulations. As members here—and our federal counterparts—when we have to do our audits, you have to enlist a professional, and that does create a burden. That's our problem. But for you and the money that you put into communities, you want to try to lessen that. I think that's

a very fair and important comment to make. I'm not sure what your suggestion is to reduce that. What would you like to see happen?

Mr. Allen Ure: If the Ontario government, through whichever organization it is, whether it's the Alcohol and Gaming Commission or whatever licensing organization, waived that and required, as was suggested by the member of Parliament over here, that the municipalities—I believe they already have to submit some documentation. If they just made a copy of it and provided that, that would do the same thing. We have to provide that to the municipalities at no cost now.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): To the opposition: Mr. Coe.

Mr. Lorne Coe: In terms of open disclosure, I'm a member of the Whitby Sunrise Rotary Club and have been for 25 years. I'm also a member of the Brooklin Lions Club in Whitby. I'd like that reflected, please, as part of the proceedings today.

Thank you, sir, for your presentation. If I understood it correctly, what you're saying is that by relaxing some of the red tape and tax implications, it would make your club and other clubs that are behind you—it would help the club operations become more efficient, because members would be able to concentrate on the fundraising that they're there to do, and serve the community. Is that correct?

Mr. Allen Ure: More efficient—and have more funds available.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Let's turn for a moment to openness and transparency. It's my understanding, through Rotary and through Lions Club and through Kinsmen as well, that when you raise money, you also publicize where that money goes. Is that not correct?

Mr. Allen Ure: Generally, all the terms of the licensing dictate where that money has to go.

Mr. Lorne Coe: And that's published in the local paper, normally, by way of articles?

Mr. Allen Ure: And on the tickets.

Mr. Lorne Coe: And it's on your website as well? Is that not correct?

Mr. Allen Ure: And the tickets.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Right. Thank you, sir.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much, sir.

KINSMEN CLUB OF STAYNER

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Our next presentation is Mr. Bill Roskar from the Kinsmen Club of Stayner.

Mr. Roskar, you're familiar with the routine. Have a seat. Introduce yourself for Hansard, and then you've got five minutes.

Mr. Bill Roskar: I'm Bill Roskar. I am currently the president of the Stayner Kinsmen. I want to thank you all for having us here. Hopefully, this will be a very successful adventure.

Just a little bit about Kinsmen: We are not worldwide. We are the only all-Canadian service club in existence that I know of. We have three clubs: a men's club and a ladies' club, and we also have one that's focused on colleges and universities, where we have members of the younger group as opposed to us older guys.

It's no secret—it has come up already today—that service clubs in general are facing a severe struggle for members, and as a result of that, fundraising suffers as well. The days when the boys get out at night and have a party for the guys only—because it's a social thing—are gone. We have to change with the times. We certainly have.

We put the fun in fundraising, because if you don't put the fun in it, nobody wants to do it, and it becomes a serious challenge. There's so much competition out there for a service dollar. There's every kind of organization out there with their hand out, asking for donations for this, that and the other. It's tough.

We, as service clubs—and I'm sure the other ones are no exception—don't ask for donations from anybody. We provide an event, provide a service, and, hopefully, we can make some money on that, and that's what goes back to the community.

Kinsmen, in general, just in our district, gave over \$10 million last year in service and dollars.

The Stayner Kinsmen alone—we're from a small town. We have 4,200 residents. Stayner Kinsmen are responsible for \$128,000 to our Collingwood hospital. That figure is going to get a lot bigger because we're about to embark on a new hospital. So I'm sure they'll be around.

One thing that we've run into—and this is to be very specific—is the AGCO. A number of the events that we do are liquor-related. For one in particular, the town has music in the park combined with a farmers' market. It was suggested a couple of years ago that it would be nice to have a beer and wine garden. So we stepped up, and we're doing it quite successfully. It runs every Thursday night in the summer—basically, 10 weeks—for two to three hours. The AGCO insists on us paying \$75 every night for a special-occasion permit. They insist on a 16% liquor levy. This is not a big-volume thing. This is a small town, a small little thing where guys like to come out, and ladies, we have beer and wine, and we just socialize. The size of the thing and the cost involved don't allow us to do it like we would like to. We're hard-pressed to break even. So we have to serve draft instead of bottled beer because, basically, it's cheaper. The event couldn't survive without doing that.

1430

We asked the AGCO if they would give us one permit for the entire 10 weeks, and we got a flat “no.” They don't do that sort of thing. You know, 75 bucks doesn't sound like much, but for a small little gathering, it mounts up. If they would let us, as a service club, get a liquor licence, it would be a huge difference. We could do that on a catering permit and do all sorts of different events that we can't do now. It would be much less. It

wouldn't cost us the special-occasion \$75. Yes, we would still have to pay the 16%; however, the distillers and the beer companies give you a discount of 16%. So it would be money in our pocket, which goes to the community. That's what we do. We're here to service the community's greatest need, and anything that can be done to help us with that would be a real boon.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Roskar. Your time is up.

We go to the government first. Mrs. Mangat.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you, Mr. Roskar, for the work you are doing, and welcome to Queen's Park.

It's my understanding that your service club, as you said in your presentation, is strongly rooted within our country, Canada. Your organization has been doing excellent work. You have donated approximately \$40 million to cystic fibrosis research and over \$1 million to Canadian communities for other projects.

As you talked in your presentation about fundraising initiatives, that there have been challenges, do you face challenges in distributing those funds when it comes to community projects?

Mr. Bill Roskar: Well, certainly. We have far more requests for funding and help than we can ever hope to satisfy. We turn away a lot of people, a lot of groups. You can only do so much. We're in a small town of 4,200. We're 32 members strong, which is a fairly healthy service club. We do well financially, but we just can't deal with them all.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: What kind of challenges do you face when it comes to distribution of funds?

Mr. Bill Roskar: Who do we say no to?

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: So that's the biggest one.

Mr. Bill Roskar: That's the biggest challenge. You're going to have to say no in some places. The problem is, who do you turn down? It's tough because you understand what people need and what their needs are, but you can't—

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: How can we overcome those challenges, in your opinion?

Mr. Bill Roskar: Well, like I said, if we didn't have all these licensing fees, that would be more money in our pocket that we could in turn give out to people in need.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you. Keep up the good work.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much.

We go to the opposition. Mr. Coe.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you very much for your delegation and the work that you're doing within your community and beyond.

I wanted to ask a question about volunteers. It's always a challenge within a service club to attract volunteers. Do you think that, with less administrative burden, you'd be able to attract more members to your club? I've heard of it in my club, and I'm interested in hearing what your experience has been.

Mr. Bill Roskar: Absolutely. One of the biggest challenges is that nobody wants to be secretary of the club

because he gets inundated with all the paperwork. That becomes a challenge. Being secretary is the worst job in the world because, you know what? There are government forms after government forms, and it becomes an administrative nightmare. Some of us aren't highly trained; we're just ordinary people.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Well, you're not there necessarily to fill out paperwork; you're there to try to give back to the community, and that's what you've been doing so well. I think the less administrative burden we can place on service clubs, you'll find that you'll have more volunteers to draw from.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Bill, can you just expand on—I wasn't aware that they also took 16% in addition to your \$75 special permit. Do they ever give any reasons why they won't be more flexible?

Mr. Bill Roskar: It's across the board. It's a 16% liquor levy. Licensees pay it as well. The local restaurant? They pay it too. However, they get a discount from the distillers. If we could get that same discount, that's 16% that we wouldn't have to pay out. It would allow us to be able to do a lot more projects—not big ones. The big ones you can pass on, but a small project like this little thing in the park becomes, at best, a break-even. We might make a little bit, lose a little bit. It comes and goes.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Well, thank you. Gila's got a question here.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Gila?

Mrs. Gila Martow: Just a quick comment, and that's that this summer, they advertised a beer tent at the music festival from the Thornhill Village Festival and they weren't able to have the beer tent because it just got too complicated for the festival organizers. They've been doing this festival for over 30 years, so it's not like they don't know how to handle things.

Bill said—or maybe it was the previous speaker—they try to put the “fun” in fundraising. I think what we're hearing is that there's somebody else taking the fun out of it.

I think it should be fun. If there are safety concerns, then state what the safety concerns are. We all want everybody to be safe, but it shouldn't be regulation after regulation.

We're here to listen to you, and thanks for coming.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much, Ms. Martow. Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you so much for being here. The changes that are proposed in this legislation will address your concerns around some of the licensing concerns. What gaps in the legislation as it's written are not covering some of the concerns that you've outlined?

Mr. Bill Roskar: I haven't seen the new proposed legislation. Is that what you're talking about?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Yes.

Mr. Jim Wilson: We don't have it either.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: In the current legislation.

Mr. Bill Roskar: I think just the licensing thing, that we don't have to pay the 16%—on a small event, that \$75 makes a big difference. We try to control the drinking and control everything else, but on the other hand, if you don't do enough volume, you can't even pay the licensing fees. If we could get around that, that would really help us.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Okay. Overall, in terms of your experience with fundraising, have you noticed steadiness, increase, decline?

Mr. Bill Roskar: It's tougher.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: It's tougher and tougher.

Mr. Bill Roskar: It's tougher, because there's so much competition out there for service dollars. You name it, there's a group out tomorrow with their hand out: "Please help us."

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much, Mr. Roskar.

MR. GRANT HUGHSON

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Our next presenter is Grant Hughson, who will be joining us by teleconference.

Mr. Hughson, can you hear me?

Mr. Grant Hughson: Yes, I can, thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): I'm Peter Tabuns. I'm the Chair of the committee. We're joined here from the official opposition by MPPs Gila Martow, Jim Wilson and Lorne Coe; from the third party, Mr. Singh; and from the government, Mr. McMeekin, Ms. Mangat, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Dhillon and Mr. Anderson.

You have five minutes to speak. If you'd start by introducing yourself and go from there.

Mr. Grant Hughson: Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today. My name is Grant Hughson and I am from the city of St. Thomas, Ontario. I'm a retired high school teacher and coach. I'm very active in my community and also in the surrounding district.

I am a Paul Harris Fellow recipient, which means that the Rotary Club saw fit to present me with an award for my volunteer work here in the community.

I'm a member of many clubs and organizations. I think what I have to say today may help out or benefit some of the other organizations that you are meeting with.

The clubs and organizations are very thankful for the groups like the Ontario Trillium Foundation and other government agencies that help us out. I would like to first of all thank all of the staff at all these organizations for their assistance. Being legally blind, I have had to use their services, and they have been a tremendous support and have assisted me with anything that I needed to do. I'd like to see more with regards to the Ontario Trillium Foundation, more support for them financially and with staff.

My main purpose for calling today is to say please do not limit your discussions just to service clubs. There are

many other organizations that would not fit into that specific category but are in the same concerns that many of the other organizations have.

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I want to give you examples of this—some of them I belong to and some of them I don't: Crime Stoppers, Odd Fellows, Masons, hospital auxiliaries, Shriners, Knights of Columbus, Rebekah's, Order of the Eastern Star, IODE, just to name a few. You will see that I am not representing any specific organization today. I belong to a number and I believe that many challenges facing one organization are also the same or similar in others. I have already heard that as I was listening with regard to membership.

Service clubs and other organizations are an essential part of any community. Our parks, pools, hospitals, scholarships and bursaries, and medical research are all areas supported by these organizations and clubs.

The other evening, I watched a program with Alex Trebek on it. He said, "We need things that bring us together." Our social system has been transformed with technology, and the clubs and organizations are feeling the change. The average age of most of the groups and organizations I belong to is over 50. Being a volunteer must be fun and enjoyable or people will not get involved.

I bring up one point as a teacher. A number of years ago, the students were mandated to do 40 hours in order to receive their high school diploma. I am not sure whether the strategy has worked, and I am not really clear whether there was any way of tracking the success of such a program. I do realize that when you mandate somebody to volunteer, that doesn't seem quite right. I know the idea was brought in on good intentions, and I hope it is working.

I heard in the last information the paperwork that is needed in all of the different organizations, from accounting to minutes, events—all those other areas. I just also want to point out that there's a great deal of time and effort put in by secretaries. I heard that in the last gentleman's comment. It seems to be increasing, and the amount of costs that are involved with regards to postage, as many of our members still receive their notices by mail.

A large percentage of people really do not understand what all the organizations and clubs are doing. I will be very open and honest: I do not know all of the service clubs' mandates. I think that's something that we need to get into our society. We, as a society, need to have a place or a group that has two beliefs: (1) The future can be better; (2) I have the power to make it so.

Finally, I have a few suggestions, or would you like me to wait until after questions?

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Hughson, we're having a bit of technical difficulty. Can we try again? Thank you.

You've run out of time. We'll go first to the opposition and you may want to touch on it with them. Ms. Martow?

Mrs. Gila Martow: Hi. So we were just talking. Thank you so much, Mr. Hughson, for calling in and for all that you do. I think we were touching on what service clubs actually do. I think that part of it is the whole name, "service clubs." Society and our communities are evolving and changing. I know that if, in many of the communities in the GTA, you said "service clubs," people would think of car service. It wouldn't even resonate with them, because it wasn't their grandparents' or parents' type of club.

Now we're seeing a lot of culturally based clubs or activists. I know I've met with a lot of accessibility activists who are concerned with making our communities more accessible for people. So we see those kinds of—I guess you can call them clubs in a way, but "organizations" seems to be the word that's bandied about for those kinds of clubs. But they are also social clubs.

I think that what we're discussing today is what we can do as legislators to help support the service clubs, the organizations in our communities, and help them do what we are asking of them so that they don't disappear and then we're wringing our hands and saying, "Well, what happened?"

If you want to comment on some of the difficulties you see, if you want to elaborate a little bit more, I'd like to invite you to do that.

Mr. Grant Hughson: That's just perfect because this puts me into my suggestions.

We need more young people involved. We need to make sure that we get this information to our young people, either through a civics course curriculum guideline and having guest speakers coming in to explain what each one of the organizations or groups do or having something similar to a job fair set up for the students to go to each year, in which they are able to find out what all these different organizations and clubs do within the community. I think that would be a better way of making sure that students get to see all of the different groups and all the different organizations, what they have and what they do for communities.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Okay. I would just add to that that maybe there's a way to partner with some of the student clubs or have some of the service clubs in the large high schools in their communities having youth clubs, the way we do in politics. We have youth branches. Thank you very much.

Do we have any time left on this side?

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): No, unfortunately. Thank you, Ms. Martow.

Mr. Grant Hughson: May I just add to that? I ran a—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Hughson, I'm sorry to say—you may have someone follow up with you in the next question. We have to go to the third party, and it's Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you, Mr. Hughson. Actually, I'll give you a couple of minutes of my time to finish up what you were about to say.

Mr. Grant Hughson: I was a teacher and I had a Crime Stoppers program at the high school. We had one

in each one of the high schools here in St. Thomas. So that gave them an opportunity to see what the Crime Stoppers program did throughout the city of St. Thomas but also across the province.

Thank you.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you, Mr. Hughson.

You mentioned that one of the most important things you think is for youth engagement, to involve youth more.

Mr. Grant Hughson: Correct.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Any specific strategies you think or any sort of barriers that the government is placing in terms of legislative or regulatory barriers that make it harder for clubs to do that, to engage with younger people?

Mr. Grant Hughson: Well, it's just the opportunity to be able to speak to these students with regard to the clubs and organizations. That's why that idea of a job fair would be something that I would push for in the education part of it: that or in the civics course that they offer in grades 9 and 10 in these schools. It would be an opportunity to bring in guest speakers from the Optimists or Rotary or Kiwanis or any of these organizations to just basically explain what they do.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Makes sense—just perhaps creating some more opportunities for young people to learn about these organizations and how to get involved. Makes sense.

Mr. Grant Hughson: Yes. The 40 volunteer hours that they have been mandated to do—I've had the benefit of working with a number of young people who have come out to assist us with regard to barbecues and things along that line. They always have a lot of fun, but they are not quite sure of the whole system, how it works and what the mandate is. During the barbecue, we try and pass that on to the students.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Sounds good. Thank you so much. No further questions.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Singh.

We go to the government. Mr. McMeekin.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: Hi, Coach. How are you doing?

Mr. Grant Hughson: Very good.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: Listen, I appreciate not only your work but your sharing. I would just footnote that it's not likely that the government is going to mandate that you have to information-share or create youth clubs or hold job fairs, but those are all very, very good ideas. The only thought that might tie into that is maybe there's some kind of invite there to take a portion of the 40 hours to make sure that inside the high schools there's a chance to do that job fair or that information-sharing, but I offer that up.

My question to you, sir, would be this: If there was one single thing that you'd like to see your government do that would help us develop a shared sense of purpose in communities around mission and outreach work, Grant, what might that be?

Mr. Grant Hughson: I think, through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, to continue to develop the programs

that already exist but make it something that's a little bit wider in scope. In some cases, it can only be for building, for this or for that. Sometimes it's funds that are necessary to just keep clubs and organizations open. The cost of running a building nowadays, unfortunately, has gone through the roof, and a lot of clubs and organizations are unable to meet those costs and are handing in their charter and failing to be around any longer.

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So I would tend to think that's got to be something—working in collaboration with the organizations, through the government, to have a way of having funds available for this, that or anything else. In the building of a hospital, I know donations from the clubs and organizations in the city of St. Thomas are just a tremendous amount of the total amount, and then to have the provincial government add to that or match that is excellent.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: You mentioned, if I heard you correctly, at least in passing, that you thought there were two prerequisites, one being that clubs or people engaged in community activity should believe the future can be better, and secondly, that they can make it so. I appreciated that. I don't think there's a service club I've ever met or been associated with that doesn't believe that, and I'm glad you do, and I appreciate you sharing it. Thanks for what you do.

Mr. Grant Hughson: Thank you very much.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: Blessings on you and your house.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Hughson. We'll go on to our next presenter now. Thank you for appearing with us today.

KIWANIS CLUB OF TORONTO

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): The next presenter is the Kiwanis Club of Toronto: Joe Elkerton, president, and Hugh Williams, executive director. Gentlemen, if you'll have a seat, I think you know the routine: Introduce yourselves for Hansard, and then you have five minutes, and there will be three minutes from each party with questions.

Rev. Joe Elkerton: Good afternoon. Thank you for the invite to be here. My name is Joe Elkerton. I'm presently the president of the Toronto Kiwanis Club. We're a club that's going into our 100th year of service in the city of Toronto. We do a number of things. We have a foundation that supports community endeavours. Our mandate is to work with children, so most of our efforts, our fundraising and support go to organizations that deal with children in the city—Boys and Girls Clubs or soccer clubs, those types of things.

Our foundation has something in the area of \$10 million, and we give away on our investments—so every year we're in the area of about \$350,000 that we give to community groups located mostly in the downtown area, but that's expanding.

Go ahead, Hugh.

Mr. Hugh Williams: My name is Hugh Williams. I don't get a chance to do this very often. I'll just say I'm executive director of Kiwanis, and I'm also past president of Rotary Etobicoke, and a Paul Harris Fellow. I'm also on the boards of two community health centres. Community is really important to me, just as it is to you, and it's why you got in the business of being elected representatives. I firmly believe in what service clubs have to offer. This kind of meeting is like catnip to me. I get a chance to really express that passion and the great things that we're doing.

The previous guy just said something that really resonated with me. The future can be better and you can make it so, I think is what he said. You can make it so—really, that's what service clubs allow people to do. There was a question earlier about youth and how we get young people involved. When you join a service club, as I did when I joined Rotary years ago and more recently with Kiwanis—that's really the main difference. When you join, you decide what kind of an impact, what programs, what you're going to do within your community. It can be your passion that Rotary and Kiwanis and these other service clubs allow you to establish.

We penned a few ideas that are in front of you right now. One of them that I really would like to get out on the table is the idea of partially tax-deductible membership dues—and it's not because I need an extra couple of bucks; it's because if the government says that membership dues are partially tax-deductible, that tells every Ontario taxpayer that service clubs are important. What an awesome way of standing up for service clubs and saying, "Hey, this is important"—just by making 50 bucks or 100 bucks or something tax-deductible. So I'd really love to see that. It's not so much for me and the little bit of money I'm going to get back, but it's really for the awareness—that you enable everyone to see stuff that we could never afford to do get in front of all these Ontarians. They'd look at their tax form and say, "That's a service club. All right. Let's check it out," and they'd find out, and they'd maybe check out Rotary or Kiwanis or Kinsmen or any of the others.

Quickly, a couple of other ideas that Joe and I would like to throw out to you—this idea of matching grants. We've seen that work really well. When the government comes forward with a matching-grant proposal, whether it's for Haiti—in Rotary's case, there were matching grants for polio; in Kiwanis's case, it was for tetanus—they work to inspire, and they give us an opportunity to go out, and everyone wins. The government looks good, we look good, and of course, people no longer die or no longer have polio or whatever. So that's a good one.

You've heard about audits.

Community festivals: I don't know if you folks are familiar with the Celebrate Ontario program. The Ministry of Tourism has a great program. Michael, back here, and I have run Toronto Ribfest for many years. We've applied for many years to it and have never got a grant. That's not what I'm here to talk about—the beef—but what I'm here to say is that it could be easier. We're not

a tourism festival. We're not TIFF. We're not trying to promote tourism, necessarily. We're trying to promote community. There's something really positive that takes place when people get together in the community and come together with families and friends and get together at a festival. It gets them out of their house. It's more and more important all the time now. It would be great if there were more funds, or some funds, available for that kind of activity.

The last thing I'd just like to say is, I know Treasury Board, I've worked in the government—I know you want to know dollars. If there's ever going to be a new program, you need the dollars to back it up. If this group could maybe think about a project that would actually define the dollar value associated with what a membership and a community service organization does—what is that—none of us would be able to ever tell you. We can sit here and say, hey, it's worth a lot to you if—as Bryn was saying earlier when he sat here, that his Rotary Club gave a million to the hospital—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Williams, I'm sorry to say that you're out of time.

We'll start with the third party. Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Was there anything else that you wanted to add to that?

Mr. Hugh Williams: I'm good.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: You were on a roll. It seemed like you were excited. I want you to continue that passion.

Since you were quite informative in your discussion, it might have left less time for your colleague.

Was there anything that you wanted to add?

Rev. Joe Elkerton: No. I think that Hugh summed it up for us. I think there are some things that we're very passionate about.

Overall, the tax thing would be an acknowledgement from the Ontario government of how much time actually is put into projects in our province. When you look at the stuff that we do—not just Kiwanis, but Rotary, Kinsmen, Lions—when you look at the impact that it has on local communities, it's an acknowledgement that you're doing stuff that is making Ontario better and you're making the lives of Ontarians better. Like Hugh says, the tax break is nothing, in one sense, but to get that acknowledgement from whoever is in government, to say, "Hey, the service that you bring to the citizens of this province is important, and here's our little thank you"—that's kind of important for me.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Well put. On one side, it will send a message that service clubs are important. From your own experience, do you think there would be an increase in donations?

Mr. Hugh Williams: One of the challenges that you've heard of already is this idea of membership, and all the organizations face it. As the guy who does the taxes in my family, I look for everything, all the lines, just in case there might be a deduction. If I'm reading that and see that service clubs get 50 bucks—well, what's a service club? If I didn't know, or if I thought, like Ms.

Martow said earlier, that this was an auto club or something like that, then if I'd read the tax form, I'd find out that, no, it's about Rotary or Kiwanis or Lions. Then I might take the next step—or I would certainly be much more open if I'd heard about it in the past.

Rev. Joe Elkerton: We also think there's a bit of a continuum between membership and fundraising and service. If we don't have members, for whatever incentive, then we don't do a lot of fundraising, which means that the money we put to community groups and service projects is diminished over time. That's the challenge. Everything goes hand in hand. It's a real continuum.

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Mr. Jagmeet Singh: It makes sense. Thank you so much for being here today, and thank you for your presentation.

Those are my questions.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Singh.

We go to the government. Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you, gentlemen, for being here. What enthusiasm. I'm a Rotarian myself.

You mentioned the fee tax deduction. I didn't even realize it wasn't tax-deductible. I just paid because of the cause and the purpose of being a Rotarian and the value to the community.

I am out in Durham, in Bowmanville. I don't believe there's a Kiwanis Club there.

Mr. Hugh Williams: I don't think so.

Interjection.

Mr. Granville Anderson: No, there isn't one. I know there are lots of Lions Clubs and Rotarians around because I go to their events.

Actually, this Saturday I'm going to a Boys and Girls Club gala. I heard you say that you contribute to them, as well.

Mr. Hugh Williams: In fact, we run the Toronto Kiwanis Boys and Girls Clubs.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Oh, so there's a connection. I didn't know that. That's wonderful. I am always enthused to see involvement of young people in clubs. Having said that, your Toronto club—what components consist of young people?

Mr. Hugh Williams: Service clubs, in general, do have young-person programs. For example, we sponsor a Circle K club. Circle K is the university-level Kiwanis club affiliate. In Rotary, there's Rotaract—the same sort of idea, where at the university level, those young people can get together and do service projects. In high schools, there is something called Key Clubs in Kiwanis, and in Rotary there's another organization called Interact. So they do exist at high school and university levels.

Our membership in our club is actually getting quite a bit younger. We inducted five new members last month. I think that the average age would be 40, which is young for a service organization. We hope to be able to offer programs for everybody.

Mr. Granville Anderson: On that note, in Toronto, you basically have clubs throughout—

Mr. Hugh Williams: We are the Toronto club proper. In Toronto, there are probably seven or eight separate clubs as well. Rotary has the same thing. There is a Toronto Rotary Club. I can't speak for Lions; I don't know.

Mr. Granville Anderson: If there's anything else you want to elaborate on—how we could help, as a government, to make things easier for you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): I'm afraid, Mr. Anderson, that you've run out of time.

We go to the official opposition. Mr. Coe.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you very much for your presentation. It was an excellent presentation with a lot of passion, which you've demonstrated in the work that you do.

The last point here, on determining the value of service clubs: Coming back to Toronto Ribfest, which you do—and we do one in Whitby, as well—can you talk a bit about how you break down the investments that derive from the Toronto Ribfest? For example, when you raise a certain amount of money, can you specifically talk about where that goes in the community and the effect that it has on the community broadly? I think it speaks to breaking down the value of service clubs and the effect that it has on your community. I think it's part of telling the story about the effect of service clubs in communities in a tangible way.

Mr. Hugh Williams: That's right. Thank you for the question.

The money that's either raised or, in the case of Toronto Kiwanis, the money that's invested that we're then able to give back—because we're a charity, we're required to give to other charities. That can mean, in the case of Kiwanis, the Toronto Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, for example, or our riding organization up north that takes disabled kids out for rides as part of their treatment. The last time I looked, I think there were 90 different organizations that my Rotary Club had supported through funds from the Toronto Ribfest specifically.

Toronto Ribfest—because you're aware of it—is certainly a huge event, maybe the largest Rotary event in the country some years, and raises, easily, \$300,000 to \$350,000, which is the same kind of money that the Toronto Kiwanis club is able to inject into the community, helping charities to do their work and accomplish what they are doing.

Mr. Lorne Coe: So those 90 organizations that you have been able to help through Rotary, through the Ribfest, would otherwise have to be looking for other sources for that money. Is that correct?

Mr. Hugh Williams: Yes. They often come to us with small asks like, "Hey, we've got a basketball program, but we need basketballs and nets"—that kind of thing, equipping them. Rarely do we pay salaries, just because that tends to have longer-term ramifications. So we generally pay for equipment, capital; we'll paint a room—

Rev. Joe Elkerton: Put a roof.

Mr. Hugh Williams: Yes, put a roof on a house that's a youth shelter, for example—those kinds of things.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Finally, your suggestion of membership dues partially being tax-deductible and matching grants: There will be a pre-consultation process scheduled in the next few months associated with the Ontario budget, and I think those particular ideas should be going forward there as well.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): With that, we go on to our next presenter. Thank you very much for your presentation.

KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We now have Kiwanis International: Mr. Gary Levine, board member. As you've seen, you have up to five minutes to present. If you'd just give your name for Hansard at the beginning of your comments, that would be great.

Mr. Gary Levine: Good afternoon. My name is Gary Levine. I'm a trustee on the Kiwanis International board. Our board is comprised of 15 representatives from countries all over the world. Kiwanis International, as you've been told previously, is a global organization of volunteers who work to improve the world one child and one community at a time. Our role, as a governance board, is to set policy and provide oversight to Kiwanis clubs regarding fiscal responsibility, member education, and volunteer service and growth.

I'd certainly like to thank you for the opportunity to address the committee this afternoon.

Kiwanians are keen advocates of fiscal responsibility. Each of our clubs, in order to retain their charter and their very existence as a Kiwanis Club, must have an approved set of club bylaws, an example of which is in the package before you. These bylaws, if you look at article 8 under "Funds and accounting," clearly set out our mandate for creating separate service and administrative accounts, budgets and ongoing annual financial reviews either by a qualified accounting firm or a financial review committee.

My own club, the Kiwanis Club of Owen Sound, just this last year, in our financial review, spent just over \$4,000.

As a former member of city council myself, I know and I'm sure you'll all agree that volunteers form the backbone of our communities. Their tireless acts of service can be seen in all walks of life.

In Owen Sound, our service club is now 91 years old. That means that, for the last 91 years, the women and the men of Kiwanis have worked to improve our community. In the last 20 years since I've been a member, we've raised over a million dollars and put it back into our community directly, and on top of that, an additional \$100,000 that we've given to Kiwanis projects around the world, including for HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean and combatting maternal/neonatal tetanus and iodine deficiency.

In Owen Sound, whether building a soccer complex, a skateboard park, an accessible playground or a children's activity room in our hospice, we provide what our local government cannot do alone.

Service clubs throughout our communities provide a safety net for children and for families, and we do it without the need to have to raise taxes.

As a former city councillor and as a chair of our police services board, I understand the need for oversight and the importance of oversight. I submit to you that it's already in place.

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As an international board, we provide and oversee the governance structure of clubs. We know that the real work of Kiwanis takes place at the club level, and we've implemented mechanisms: annual leadership training, background checks and a network of responsible, active mentors—our governors and lieutenant governors—who work with the clubs on a daily basis at a very personal level. Now 101 years old, Kiwanis is proud of our legacy of service and responsible community service.

In the end, I submit to you, our government, that you have to ask yourself a question: Do you trust your local service clubs? If not, then you have to add more layers of expense, time and burden, and in doing so, unfortunately create further barriers to our very existence. If you do not trust your citizens for freely donating their time and energy to improve their hometowns, you're sending a clear message, and I hope it's a message that ultimately isn't sent.

Throughout Canada and the United States, service club membership is in decline. Adding additional levels of bureaucracy weighing heavily on clubs will not help that. It will result in the disappearance of some altogether. So I urge you, our government, to allow service clubs to continue to do the good work that they do, to continue doing what they do best: to provide altruistic service to others. You do it because you do trust them.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much. We go first to the government. From the government, Mr. Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much for presenting, and thank you very much for your support of the children's activity room at the Bruce Grey hospice. I was up there a few weeks ago, I think on the 17th, to announce support for the hospice.

Mr. Gary Levine: It's a fabulous project.

Mr. John Fraser: I don't want to talk too much about the hospice—that's not why we're here—but it is those pieces that service clubs all over Ontario are delivering which are really critical to that happening, and that doesn't go unnoticed.

Having said that, I understand what you're saying about regulatory burden. One of the things is, how do you create that balance, right? And to distinguish between identities to ensure that you're fair across the board—but not all clubs are equal. I'm not saying service clubs, but not all organizations are equal.

One of the things that we heard earlier on was the multiple layers of reporting. There were suggestions to report through municipalities. Keeping in mind that you're talking about a relatively—the need to report is there, but I get a sense that there's a need to report too much or to too many.

Mr. Gary Levine: Well, MPP Fraser, we have a pretty well established and entrenched reporting mechanism in place right now. Our clubs monthly do onerous reports that are sent to their mentorship team of lieutenant governors and governors, and ultimately to Kiwanis International, as well.

In addition to that, just the very nature of the bylaws that you have before you sets out the fiscal need for conducting annual reviews etc., and we take that very seriously. The reporting that we do regarding background checks and criminal record checks etc. is something that Kiwanis takes very seriously, and ensures that all of our members working directly with youth have to do.

So those mechanisms are in place right now, and we're happy to share that information. It's certainly not secret by any means. But by the same token, we don't want to make the administrative jobs of our secretaries—and this was talked about a few minutes ago, as well—so onerous that they just don't want to do it. Ultimately, we're all volunteers.

Mr. John Fraser: No, I agree with what you're saying. So again, it's reporting to too many of the same thing, or the same types of things, that's the real challenge. Are you suggesting, as an international organization that is responsible for clubs across Ontario, that that reporting be done through you? Is that the suggestion?

Mr. Gary Levine: Currently, it is being done through us.

Mr. John Fraser: Okay.

Mr. Gary Levine: And I guess we've submitted it for the last 101 years. It has been pretty effective.

Mr. John Fraser: Okay. I think what I was trying to say—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Fraser, I'm sorry to say you're out of time. I know, you were just getting going. I understand that.

We go to the official opposition. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Mr. Levine, I'm going to go along the same lines as John there in that it's a little confusing for us, because you spent about \$4,000 last year getting your books checked and double-checked, I guess. We're told that if a fundraiser is over \$50,000, the audit is at least \$4,500. Under \$50,000, it's \$450. If you had a special fundraiser, it's in addition to your regular books?

Mr. Gary Levine: What we did is we went to an established accounting firm in Owen Sound. They actually submitted an in-kind bill, if you like, of just over double that. It was about \$9,000. Because of the charitable nature of our organization and the goodwill of the accounting company, they reduced their bill to just over \$4,000 for us.

Mr. Jim Wilson: All right. So just for everyone in the room, for guys like me, we'll make sure when we get to the final report that we understand fully the financial obligations that we're putting on you. They sound rather onerous and more than I knew about it. That's for sure.

Mr. Gary Levine: Through the Chair, the financial review that was done of course encompasses all of the

activities of the club through the year. This is an annual occurrence, so at our next board meeting, I'm sure the board will be advocating that we use the same company and they'll be beginning the review of this last year. We're constantly undergoing a review of our finances.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Third party: Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you very much. I like the way you framed it, that it's a matter of whether you trust the service clubs and the members and the people who participate in that. I appreciate that.

Just a point of clarification: Is there a way, in your mind, to set up a piece of legislation that would incorporate Kiwanis, for example, as a club, as well as other clubs that may not have as rigorous a history of over a century as you just indicated, and apply rules that would work for both something as well established as Kiwanis and something that's maybe less established and not international in nature and not as well developed?

Mr. Gary Levine: MPP Singh, I'm sure there is. My experience, of course, is with Kiwanis. I'd be surprised if the Rotarians in the group didn't have very similar financial responsibilities that they have to make to retain their Rotary charter. I'm sure the Lions are much the same as well.

We'd be happy to work with you or any of the members on developing some sort of a legislation that isn't onerous, that doesn't seem top-down, that isn't a made-in-Toronto solution and that works for the entire province.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Okay. That's very helpful. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, sir.

Mr. Gary Levine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL, DISTRICT 7070

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We go to our next presentation, then. Rotary International, District 7070: Mr. Jim Louttit, Mr. Pierre Plourde and Mr. Wilf Wilkinson. Gentlemen, if you'll come up to the front. The Clerk will come and get your presentations. As you've observed, if you'll introduce yourselves for Hansard before you speak, you have up to five minutes, and then we'll go on a three-minute rotation to each party.

Mr. Jim Louttit: Good afternoon. My name is Jim Louttit. I'm district governor for district 7070. My colleagues will be speaking, and they can introduce themselves at the end of my presentation.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, it is my honour to speak to you today. I appreciate the support and the opportunity to present two recommendations.

The first is on a lack of legislative support and clarity for the non-profit sector. To provide some background, in 2009, the Parliament of Canada passed the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, which was then proclaimed into force during 2010-11. In 2010, the Legislative

Assembly of Ontario passed the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, which would provide a similar legislative framework for not-for-profit organizations incorporated in Ontario as the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act did for federally incorporated not-for-profit organizations.

To date, however, the Ontario act has not yet been proclaimed into force despite it being passed over six years ago. It has even been amended once despite not being proclaimed into force.

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Since not-for-profit organizations cannot incorporate in Ontario under the Business Corporations Act, and since not-for-profit organizations without federal reach or aspect cannot incorporate under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, this leaves incorporated organizations, such as Rotary clubs and Rotary districts, relying on letters patent issued under the Lieutenant Governor's seal pursuant to the Corporations Act.

The Corporations Act is an unwieldy piece of legislation designed to apply to many types of companies and corporations. It applies equally to for-profit companies and not-for-profit companies. It therefore has many provisions which may or may not be applicable to service clubs. Without specialized legal advice, which can be expensive for service clubs to obtain, service clubs can easily run afoul of the law.

Under the simpler Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, service clubs would have legislative clarity, a single legislative model about which to be concerned, and better protections for the clubs and members.

Should you recommend that the Lieutenant Governor issue a proclamation proclaiming the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act into force, service clubs would have a transition period of five years to bring themselves under the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act.

The second is the lack of a tax deduction for service club membership dues.

On February 19, 2015, Mr. Wilson, member of provincial Parliament for Simcoe-Grey, said, in making the motion which led to the study, that "we can all agree that these service clubs and others bring vast benefits to our communities." We all agree with that.

Mr. Wilson went on to say, "First and foremost, they are social clubs." That is incorrect, at least with respect to Rotary. Rotarians are like-minded neighbours, friends and community leaders who come together to create positive, lasting change in their communities. We share a passion for service, which helps us solve some of our communities' toughest challenges. We truly place service above self.

The constitution of Rotary International says: "The object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and ... to encourage and foster ... the development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service...." So Rotary is not a social club with incidental charitable, philanthropic or humanitarian goals. It is a service organization in which fellowship and fraternalism are incidental benefits, never first and foremost.

Service organizations such as Rotary serve an important role in the community by supporting programs such as food banks, recreation, shelters etc. We assist organizations working in the community to promote healthy lifestyles, to break the cycle of poverty, and to support children and at-risk youth.

As Rotarians, we are acting as volunteers to create positive, lasting change in our communities. We provide services and benefits to communities which inevitably reduce the impact on the public purse.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): I'm sorry to say that you've run out of time.

We go first to the official opposition: Mr. Coe.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Through me, would you like to continue your presentation and use up some of my time?

Mr. Jim Louttit: Thank you very much. What we're saying is that if the assembly were to consider having a non-taxable tax credit in the amount of dues paid by the members, up to a certain annual maximum of, say, \$1,000, this would assist us in recruiting more members. This would show support to service clubs and the good that is being done in our communities by organizations such as Rotary.

Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Coe.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you. If I understand you correctly, based on your presentation, in terms of the reference to the Ontario act that hasn't been proclaimed into force for six years, you feel that if it was, it would address the issues we've talked about in terms of financial audits, unnecessary regulations and taxes, because there are some clubs who get involved in selling cars, and there's a tax involved with that as well that they have to pay. There's also sometimes the issue of liability insurance, in terms of boards of directors. Do you feel that the Ontario act would address those particular issues?

Mr. Jim Louttit: Yes, we do, and I'd like to pass this to Pierre Plourde, who is a Rotarian from our Pickering club.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Pierre Plourde: Thank you, Mr. Coe. The advantage of the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act that was passed in 2010 is that it's designed for not-for-profit corporations. I noted in reading the debates from when Mr. Wilson made his motion that led to this committee, Madame Gélinas said that when it was passed there was some resistance because clubs felt it was too long and too onerous. But I find it's actually the other way around when I compare it to the existing legislation, the Corporations Act. The Corporations Act is probably 50% longer in terms of size than the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, and it can be hard to figure out what parts of the Corporations Act apply and don't apply. It would certainly help us in terms of directors' insurance and in terms of auditing, because then there would be clear thresholds for when clubs needed audits. There wouldn't be a need to have duplicative audits because clubs under a certain threshold wouldn't need them and

over a certain threshold they would need them. It's all in the act.

As well, it would give us the legislative clarity. I don't think it would address so much things like the car tax or the property taxes. Those are separate provincial acts that would need amendments. But it would certainly address the legislative framework in which we operate.

Mr. Lorne Coe: And that legislation, then, would be combined with some of the checks and balances that exist already in Rotary International, in terms of financial transactions?

Mr. Pierre Plourde: Exactly.

Mr. Lorne Coe: For volunteers—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): And with that, Mr. Coe, you're out of time. I'm sorry. Mr. Singh?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm just looking through your notes here. One of the issues is that there's the current legislation that governs the type of service clubs that Rotary Clubs fall into, beneath our unwieldy pieces of legislation. First off, it's just difficult to deal with something that's so unwieldy. Can you describe what makes it unwieldy? Is it the length of it, the complication or the fact that it's out of date?

Mr. Pierre Plourde: It's mostly because it's meant to apply to many things. The Corporations Act applies to every corporation except those that are under the Business Corporations Act and those that are under the Co-operative Corporations Act. It's meant to apply to things like mining companies and insurance companies as well as social and service clubs. It applies as equally to golf courses as it does to service clubs. Because it has to apply to a large inventory of organizations, it has a lot of provisions in it that may or may not apply to the subset of the not-for-profit sector, whereas the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act that was passed in 2010 is tailored to the not-for-profit sector. That's why it's smaller in size. Everything in it applies clearly to the not-for-profit sector.

If you're under the Corporations Act, you have to figure out, "Does this apply to me or is this only for insurance companies?" or "Is this for mining companies or is this for the Rotary Club?"

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Very well explained—I appreciate that. Do you think there should be a separate subset of the not-for-profit that specifically deals with service clubs, or do you think it could be crafted within the not-for-profit?

Mr. Pierre Plourde: The Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, as it is now, is likely adequate, I think, until we get some experience actually working under it. I've had some working under the federal version with some federal not-for-profits, so I do think it would work well without anything extra. Experience will tell whether I'm correct or not, especially during that five-year—there is already a built-in five-year transition period, so once it's proclaimed into force by the Lieutenant Governor, that starts a five-year clock for clubs to bring themselves in under the new act.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Perfect. That's great. Thank you very much for those answers.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We go to the government: Mrs. Mangat.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you, Mr. Louttit, for your presentation. I really appreciate the work you have been doing for Rotary Clubs. As a former Rotarian, I can understand. I know the joy of being a Rotarian and volunteer work.

In your presentation, you raised the issue of sales tax. My understanding is that sales tax is a federal responsibility. Has there been any discussion with the federal government? Have you ever talked with them? If you have, can you share with us?

Mr. Jim Louttit: No, I have not. Let me pass the rest of the answer to Wilf Wilkinson, who is a past Rotary International president and also a member of the Trenton club.

Mr. Wilf Wilkinson: I have very little to say, other than that I appreciate this opportunity. We have never applied to the federal government about sales tax. Rotary Clubs are large in some cases and small in other cases, as you would know, so it has not become a challenge.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: It hasn't become a challenge so far.

Mr. Wilf Wilkinson: No. I mean, it's a challenge if we just pay it.

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Mrs. Amrit Mangat: My second question is, I know membership expansion is always a top priority at any service club. Has your organization been faced with that challenge? I have heard from the speakers who came before you about the decline in membership at the service clubs. Can you speak about some of the difficulties your service club faces with its membership initiatives?

Mr. Jim Louttit: Just as a base, in North America, on the Rotary side, yes, the membership has been declining over the last 10 or so years. Fortunately, we have a very aggressive membership committee in our district, and we've been going against that trend. In fact, I just got some numbers this morning. Our district membership committee meets every week by telephone for half an hour, just to talk about initiatives that we have within our district. Just to give you a better idea, for the non-Rotarians, our district runs from the west side of Toronto to as far east as the Belleville-Picton-Stirling area and then as far north as Alliston, in kind of that rectangle, so we have a fair-sized area.

Since July 1, our Rotary year, we're up net 52 members this year. We do have a committee that's working on looking for ways to bring in new members. Some of the other clubs, other service organizations, have talked about the age of members. I think we really need to go after the young members, the youth. They're the future leaders of Rotary. That's what we're trying to do.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): With that, I'm sorry to say that we've run out of time.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Okay, thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much, gentlemen. We appreciate the presentation.

LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL, ELMIRA LIONS CLUB

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Our next presenter, then, is Arthur Woods, Lions Clubs International, Elmira. Mr. Woods, as you have observed, you have up to five minutes to present. When you start, if you'd introduce yourself for Hansard, that would be great.

Mr. Arthur Woods: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have a handout. I was instructed to bring 25 copies, and I did so.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ted McMeekin): Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Arthur Woods: Thank you. First of all, my name is Arthur Woods. I've been a member of the Elmira Lions Club since 1972. I'm sure that by my grey hair, you will appreciate my status in my organization.

I had the privilege of serving as an international director for Lions Clubs International. There is one on the international board from Canada at all times, and I had that honour to serve for a two-year term.

I think it's important to recognize that Lions are a committed group of service-minded people. I'm sure the other clubs are as well. But in my personal life, I probably spend around 25 hours a week on service work through Lionism.

To make sure you realize that Lionism is the largest service club in the world, in Canada and in Ontario: In Ontario, as we speak, we have 12,884 members in 531 clubs scattered around the province. There are a few exceptions—a couple in Quebec—and the northwest portion of Ontario is in a different area.

Of course, each club, in its own respective town or area, is committed to all kinds of community needs. Over the years, Lions have been famous for arenas, sports parks, recreational trails and hands-on help to people who need help. That's what we're in business for.

In the broad scope around the world, of course, we are the premier trainer of dog guides for a variety of persons who need them—not just Seeing Eye dogs but all kinds—disaster relief, and worldwide humanitarian aid.

I could go on and on all day about the projects we do, but it all involves working hands-on on projects that we get involved with in our communities, and raising money for whatever.

I came in during the last presentation, and I would want to comment for a moment on the social aspect. Like Rotary, we are not primarily a social club, but be assured that if we can't have fun doing what we're doing, we're in the wrong business. That comes up over and over. So I don't know whether you would say that's truly social or not, but we try hard to have a good time while we do our work.

I want to thank all of you, as a committee, and in particular Jim Wilson, for recognizing these issues. I'm sure, by this time of the day, you've heard most of the issues. I only want to speak to you briefly about a few that I may add.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Ted McMeekin): You have about a minute left, sir.

Mr. Arthur Woods: There are areas of concern on taxation.

On income tax, the filing of the form 2 is a requirement of incorporated service clubs. Many don't do it—not intentionally, but just because of the cost involved.

The HST requirement to have a number and to report if the gross income is over \$50,000 can be a huge issue for some clubs with a lot of small-sale items like food trailers.

On property tax, of course, we're not included in subsection 6.1 of the Assessment Act, which does exempt some. I wonder perhaps if some Lions' activities might be included there.

The reporting requirement: I've set that out.

Licensing issues on food service: I've included a copy of a letter at the back of my report from a club member who has had huge issues with his food trailer, involving the recent changes under the TSSA. I'm sure you're all familiar with that act and the huge imposition, which probably was generated from the proliferation of food trucks.

Lottery and alcohol events create huge issues for average clubs across the province of Ontario. Unfortunately, we find ourselves often breaking the law technically, but we try our best to comply. The problem is, even for a small gathering, of course, the licence fee is \$75 under the liquor act, and the bingo licence, which is a common feature at many Lions Clubs—a major portion of the cost goes to those licences. I assume the original intent of the licence fee was for the cost of preparing the licence. Many of these are very straightforward, and I would request consideration being given to lowering those a certain amount.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): And with that, I'm sorry to say that you're out of time.

We go first to the third party: Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you for your presentation. I appreciate you taking the time to share those concerns with us. I didn't know that it was the largest club in the world. That's pretty impressive. Thank you for sharing that.

Mr. Arthur Woods: Some 1.4 million members.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That's amazing. You've outlined a number of areas that would benefit—that would assist the club in doing its job. I note the addressing of the property tax concern and the reporting requirement.

The way the current circumstances are, how difficult is it for clubs to continue to exist, to continue to grow and to build, with the current state of affairs?

Mr. Arthur Woods: Obviously, there are many pitfalls that we have to be concerned about. For example, I've always touted and promoted that all clubs must be incorporated for liability issues, hands down. I've done many of them myself for that reason. The problem is, that triggers filing an annual income tax return, which an unincorporated club does not do. So we're caught in a real quandary there. I know that's federal, but on the other hand, it all involves everything we're doing.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Interesting. The previous speaker was saying that the way the act that service clubs fall under is written, it also applies to so many other organizations that it's hard to figure out which components apply to service clubs and which components don't apply. So you sometimes end up, technically, finding yourself in a position where you might be contravening an element of the act unintentionally. Is that something that impacts you or your members?

Mr. Arthur Woods: For sure. As I mentioned on my last page, it seems the philosophy behind many of these regulations is that one size fits all, whether it's a national charity that has a stable of paid lawyers and accountants who look after this for them, or a Lions Club with 10 members that simply can't afford to pay for that kind of help. It's one-size-fits-all and I'm suggesting in here that maybe reviewing it based on the monetary level or some other level would be a way to help us a great deal to do what we would like to do.

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Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Beautiful. Thank you very much for your feedback. I appreciate it.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Singh. We go to the government. Mrs. Mangat?

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you, Mr. Woods, for your presentation. I represent the riding of Mississauga—Brampton South. It's a very diverse riding. The Lions Club in Mississauga is doing great work. Every year they hold their annual gala in my riding, and I have had the opportunity to attend that gala.

They talk about social, economic and technological issues. My question to you is, as we live in a digital age, does your service club have any strategy to adopt new technology?

Mr. Arthur Woods: Interesting question. Briefly: I come from a small town of 10,000 people, with two Lions Clubs—one all-male, one all-female; a total of almost 200 members. My Lions Club is the largest club in Canada. We're thinking of forming an online club.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Very good.

Mr. Arthur Woods: Three ladies came up with the idea. They're hands-on involved in the dog-training programs, which I am too. They're up to 22 members and they're going to not have regular meetings like old guys like me believe in. It'll all be done online. So, yes, we're inching down that road.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: You are? Very good. Thank you very much for the work you are doing. I appreciate it.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mrs. Mangat. We go to the official opposition.

Mr. Pettapiece.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you, Chair. Good to see you, Art. It's always a pleasure to see you. Art was appointed district governor in the club that I belong to, and certainly he is very distinguished as an international director.

I wanted to talk to you a little bit about the TSSA. I've just skimmed over this letter that was written at the back. There's a line in it that says, "Much of what a service club is able to accomplish is buoyed by the optimism of

possibility.” I know from my experience that members come up with an idea that seems a real good idea, and then they run into regulations that can kill the idea. I wonder, sir, if you could expand on what happened with this food truck.

Mr. Arthur Woods: I know the situation. This club actually bought a new food trailer approximately three years ago. It was all up to snuff. We paid good dollars for it, retired the old one, and then all of a sudden a year ago we’re hit with this whole new set of rules and regulations. It was a challenge. The club almost voted it down, because we spent between \$10,000 and \$11,000, along with all the free labour, to bring it up to standard.

Many clubs would have said, “Forget it, we’re not going to go down that road because it’ll take probably five to 10 years to recoup the actual expenditures.” So it’s a real challenge to comply with that or the food safety rules.

I’m not arguing with the concept that rules and all that are needed. It’s just that they can be so excessive and so difficult to understand and comprehend. In our hall which we operate—I was chair for 12 years—one inspector comes in and says the stove is okay; the next year the guy comes in and says, “Get rid of the stove.” It’s a true story. It’s just most difficult to know how to blend in.

I don’t know whether that answers what you’re after, but it’s an ongoing problem for sure.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I think that nobody would question that we want things to be safe. Certainly that’s fine, but I think it’s more difficult to get people interested—or, if they’re in the club, to stay interested—when sometimes rules and especially paperwork are an issue, with the forms you have to fill out for lotteries and that type of thing. Unless you have somebody who is capable of doing that or really interested in doing that, it’s difficult for a club to succeed in some of these things.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mrs. Martow?

Mrs. Gila Martow: I’ll just add to that that I went to a non-profit summer camp and I worked at non-profit summer camps and I remember the hysteria: “The health inspector’s coming! The health inspector’s coming!” We would all run around and try to clean up, and kids would be literally crying.

I think that, obviously, as my colleague said, we want everybody to be safe. But we also know that sometimes these inspectors come in and they go on maybe a bit of a power trip, and they lose sight of what the whole point of the exercise is. I think that we look at the legislation and we need the input. We need to always leave that wiggle room for people to have good judgement. I’ll leave it at that. Thanks.

Mr. Arthur Woods: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): And with that, we’ve come to the end of the time. Thank you very much for your presentation today.

ROTARY CLUB OF ST. THOMAS

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Our next presenter, then, is Diane Chantler from the St. Thomas Rotary. Ms.

Chantler, as you’ve observed, you have up to five minutes to speak. If you’d introduce yourself first, for Hansard.

Ms. Diane Chantler: Thank you, Mr. Chair, committee members, staff and guests this afternoon. My name is Diane Chantler. I am the district governor for Rotary District 6330. My area in Ontario extends from Stratford all the way north to Lion’s Head, west to Sarnia and it includes the London and St. Thomas areas. Today, as was discussed earlier, I am representing Rotary as well as my 41 rural and urban Rotary Clubs. In my district, that is about 1,200 Rotarians.

The challenges that are facing us today as service organizations is continuing our support both in rural and urban communities, some areas with reduced populations, with more rules and regulations related to our club operations. In small and large communities, money and additions to the community from Rotarian volunteers is really substantial. Donations to hospitals, parks, community centres, playgrounds, children, literacy, food banks, seniors programs and the homeless would be truly missed if Rotary and other service clubs were not present.

As was mentioned earlier today, my colleagues’ and my clubs have conferred, and I have two topics for today. The first one, which has been talked about a little bit—so I will try to reduce my comments—is lottery licensing under the AGCO. My second topic is insurance.

Whether it is a lottery of \$1,000 or \$50,000, we have the same forms and the same timelines, and the task has become very onerous, especially for smaller service organizations. If you look online, the application process, even though it’s in a PDF form, is five to six pages long, with information, numbers, projects and financial details. If we are looking to raise funds for any local project, we are governed by the province as far as the rules and regulations. If the type of activity is not mentioned under the AGCO, then it is not licensable. The process involves the application—a lengthy procedure—and often a long time monitoring and follow-up reporting, with timelines for each. And all of this is usually done at the municipal level, as we’ve talked about, when it’s under \$50,000.

The other issue that has been raised by our group is that clubs are only able to hold one licence at a time, which means if a service organization decides they want to hold a monthly trip-of-the-month draw or a monthly dinner-of-the-month draw, they cannot do any other related activity until that one is completed. That means that clubs in our communities have to prioritize what events and activities they wish to run, and to ensure that there is absolutely no overlap. As a result, clubs have had to discontinue revenue-generating activities. The total amount of prizes to be awarded by a lottery must be provided, even before the raffle is run, before any tickets are sold and any funds have been collected. Events and activities that have run for decades in our communities are no longer running.

The other item I’d like to talk about additionally is if you look at section 202 of the Criminal Code of Canada,

it prohibits all forms of gambling, betting, bookmaking, etc. Under section 206, which prohibits lotteries and games of chance, permitted lotteries are specific in section 207. For our purposes, the exception is in section 207(1)(b), that is “for a charitable or religious organization, pursuant to a licence issued by the Lieutenant Governor in Council....” It says, “If the proceeds from the lottery scheme are used for a charitable or religious object or purpose.”

So, for example, if a Rotary Club participates in a bingo, under this licence the funds raised under that activity can only be given to registered charities. Now, you contrast that with funds raised from other activities, such as, say, the ribfest that was mentioned earlier. Those funds can be distributed to anyone, as our board of directors sees fit. It would be nice to see some changes in these particular areas, even though it would come from Parliament, not the province. What the province could do for us is to help reduce the amount of red tape and onerous paperwork and reporting involved in getting such a licence. Right now, it is still very difficult and limited.

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The second item that I'd like to speak to is insurance. In my district alone, the cost for insurance during the past five years has ranged from \$27,000 to \$31,000 per year. In the past five years of my financial statements for my district, we have paid almost \$145,000 in premiums in my district alone. Multiply that by all the service organizations in our province that are paying premiums for insurance coverage and liability insurance, and that number becomes even more oppressive. All of this money becomes part of the cost of operating our service organizations, and therefore costs us more and more to operate with the appropriate coverage.

We would ask for your support in identifying ways to reduce insurance costs for service organizations, acknowledging that events and activities they are running are generating funds that are returned to their communities and, again, providing needed funding that is not being required from the provincial government.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Ms. Chantler, I'm sorry to say that with that, you're out of time.

We go first to the government. Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Hi, Ms. Chantler. Thank you for being here and for your service as a Rotarian. I would have worn my pin, but I'm not allowed to.

Did you have anything that you wanted to finish off that's important? Go ahead.

Ms. Diane Chantler: No, I just had one closing sentence, so we are good. Thank you, though.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Okay. Earlier, we heard a lot of mention about auditing. As financial audits are the responsibility of the federal government, can you please tell us if you have had any constructive conversations with representatives of that level, and if so, what was discussed?

Ms. Diane Chantler: My only interaction with that level was with a club that had a CRA-type audit, that ran

a small foundation. Again, it became a very onerous, detailed, informed—lots and lots of volunteer hours were put in to make sure that all of the rules and regulations were being followed for a very small foundation within a Rotary Club. That's really my only involvement with that, but it was a lot of time and energy—I would say several hundreds of volunteer hours—in resolving some very small related items.

Mr. Granville Anderson: My club has had the same problem with licensing for raffles etc. Do you have any ideas or any suggestions that we could look at that would make the process less onerous or easier for you?

Ms. Diane Chantler: Sure. Perhaps some consideration for smaller funding events; maybe we could look at more of a tiered structure. Right now, it basically goes from \$1,000 to \$50,000. Maybe the application process would be simplified for fundraising in lower amounts.

For example, a small raffle of an item or a quilt at an event, which is a small amount, still requires licensing, but it might be less than \$1,500. Perhaps we could see a tiered structure that would reduce the administration for, say, amounts up to \$10,000 or \$20,000 and so on, and have more of a tiered structure for clubs to work with.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Anderson. We go to the official opposition: Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Thank you for your detail. This was raised by my Wasaga Beach Rotary Club friends: one licence at a time. You mentioned that some lotteries or fundraising activities have had to be cancelled. Do you want to expand on that?

Ms. Diane Chantler: Sure. Again, please understand that this is a compilation of information from not only my district, but from some of the other governors who are present here today.

If your Rotary Club or any service organization makes a decision that they want to run any kind of lottery event that runs over a period of time—as I mentioned, maybe they're selling tickets on a trip-of-the-month draw, for example, that runs over a 12-month period. That means they cannot hold any other lottery-type licensing during that period.

Why not? Why couldn't they? That means they're picking and choosing what they can run, because there can be no overlap in the lottery licensing. One has to be completed, all the reporting completed, before they can start another one.

From an overall perspective, I think that diminishes the opportunity for service organizations to raise funds in their community that they are giving back to their communities in the many ways that have been mentioned here today. Perhaps there is an opportunity at your level to look at letting service organizations have more than one licence at one time.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Ms. Martow.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I just want to add to that. It's really sad that we hear so often, not just on this issue, about red tape, about difficulties, when we know with computers and software now that things should actually

be getting easier. There's absolutely no reason why clubs can't have a form online; all the information is there and each time they just have to fill in the forms and make the changes. Standard information is there and they just have to update it.

In terms of the licensing, would you think it was feasible if you were allowed to do, say, two things overlapping or three things? Would there be a number? I'm just visualizing some kind of software where you could have permit 1 going from this date to this date and that sort of thing.

Ms. Diane Chantler: I think that having the opportunity to have some form of multiple licences at one time—and perhaps that would depend on the size of the organization. In some communities, they might need to have three or four or more at one time, and maybe in a small community, one or two would be sufficient. Perhaps that could be considered, maybe based on population of a community or the number of representatives in that service organization. Remembering that everyone in our organization is a volunteer, you have more people, you have more opportunity to do more things and give back to your community.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Well, I really appreciate you coming in. Do I have two seconds left?

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Nope.

Mrs. Gila Martow: No? Okay. Well, thank you for coming.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you for asking, though.

We go to the third party: Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you so much for being here and thank you for your presentation. Just building on the last comment, with respect to the multiple licences, one of the suggestions you provided, which I think is a great suggestion, is making the potential option for having multiple licences based on the number of members. I think it's a good suggestion. If you have a lot of members, you're more likely to be able to accommodate that, and then maybe working in the size of the community. Also, communities where there is no other option in terms of activities, and this is one of the main sources of entertainment perhaps, maybe that's another reason to have multiple licences.

If this was to pass, where there are multiple licences and addressing particularly the bingo example you provided, what would be the impact in terms of your personal organization, the area or the district that you represent or for local groups? What would be the benefit to the groups?

Ms. Diane Chantler: Thank you. The benefit to that, as I mentioned earlier, would mean that service organizations would no longer have to prioritize what they were going to do. At the end of the day, if you are running two events instead of one, your potential for making more money to give back to your community is significant. Multiply that by hundreds and hundreds and thousands of service organizations that are working to make their communities a better place, it's hard to put a real number on it.

But what if—and we have the situation where there is only one service organization in a very small community. That restriction means if there are three or four service organizations, they could be running three or four events, one under each organization. But what if there's only one organization? Now they can only run one event.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: You said it very well. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much, ma'am.

LIONS CLUB INTERNATIONAL, NEWMARKET LIONS CLUB

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Our next presenter, then, is Richard Metcalfe from Lions Club International. Mr. Metcalfe.

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: Thank you very much. My name is Richard Metcalfe, and I'm with the Newmarket Lions Club. As you've already heard from Art Woods, we are the largest service organization in the world.

My reason for being here today is to discuss some interference that comes along with our dealing with government. Whether it be at the local level, the provincial level or the federal level, it doesn't really matter.

The Newmarket Lions Club, to give you an example, is one of two Lions Clubs in Newmarket. We raise—and we support the community—in the tune of \$100,000 a year. One of our big causes that we support is the Southlake hospital foundation. We have recently sponsored one of the 10 rooms being built in the new 10-bed hospice at Southlake hospital.

Earlier this year, we conducted a car draw. We have a website and what we did was, through social media, we advertised that our \$75 car-draw ticket could be purchased by going to the Newmarket Lions Club website: Click on the button that says "Buy a ticket," go in through PayPal, buy your ticket or tickets and then we mailed out the tickets to the purchasers. That went very well. Ticket sales were going very, very well, until we got a call ordering us to take that off our website because it's illegal to sell lottery tickets online. That came from government. I thought this was strange, because I've bought tickets from the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the cancer society and SickKids hospital and whatnot online. So I thought I would look into it and see why that was. I first went to my member of provincial Parliament, and he was absolutely shocked and couldn't figure out the reason why. So I did a little bit more digging and I came up with bulletin 61. I think you have that in front of you now.

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Bulletin 61, the gaming regulations—it's dated May 2009. The bulletin is titled Use of Internet Technology for Raffle Lottery Licensees. What the bulletin sets out is that the government is going to—I say government; I consider the Alcohol and Gaming Commission to be an arm of government. Maybe I'm wrong. The AGCO—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): No, you're right.

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: Oh, okay—is part of government. What they did is they decided they were going to do a test pilot project, starting on July 1, 2009, that would let charities sell tickets online. However, to take part in that pilot project, you had to have a million-dollar—or more—prize board. Well, we know who the million-dollar-plus prize boards are. They're SickKids hospital, the cancer society, Heart and Stroke Foundation. But if this is a test pilot, why would you not want to test a broad sector of your lottery licensees and see how that worked out?

You'll see in the wording—and I found this very strange language for a government-run project—that the project would probably end in 2011. I thought that was very strange language to use when you're setting up a test project. Are you going to end it in 2011 or aren't you? Well, it seems it never ended. There is no end date. This has obviously been set up by the AGCO to permit one level of lottery to sell online and keep all the others from selling online. To me, this is an example of unfairness.

Everybody, including my own MPP, cannot understand why a person can't buy a car draw ticket online. We buy everything else online. Why can't he buy a ticket online?

That's my purpose in coming today. I just have to say that I agree with everybody else who has been presenting. I wish I had more time to talk to you about other unfairness within this—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Metcalfe, I'm sorry to say this, but you've run out of your five minutes.

We go to the first questioners, being the official opposition. Ms. Martow.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I would invite you to continue, especially since you saved so much time unpacking while you were speaking.

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: I wish I had more time, because I can go into examples with the Trillium Foundation and the liquor licence board and how they put up walls and they block us. I've got all kinds of examples. I've been dealing with these entities for 20 years now, and it becomes frustrating. Twenty years ago, we didn't have these roadblocks put up in front of us. There are many, but I chose this one today to present to you.

I don't know whether anybody has an answer as to why it is that in 2011 this pilot project was supposed to end and it hasn't ended. There is no more language—and then here in 2016, it's still illegal for the Newmarket Lions Club to sell a car draw ticket online.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I keep going back to technology. It's just such a shock to me and, I think, many people that we're not using more technology—but I think that the counter of that is control. I hate to say it, but I think that a lot of it is that bureaucrats fear somehow losing control. Sometimes they're right to fear losing control, because when there are problems, the fingers get pointed at them.

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: And I have no problem with that.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Right. So other than, say, selling lottery tickets online, can you think of other ways that we

could make the necessary changes to streamline—basically, to make your life easier?

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: Certainly. Let's open it up to online sales of lottery tickets. The big lotteries have been doing it now since 2009, and there are regulations. We live by regulations; we're happy to follow regulations. Give us the regulations and let us do it as well.

We were doing great. We were raising all kinds of money for the Southlake Foundation. As soon as we were ordered to stop doing it, down went the sales and down went the fundraising.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Any other types of fundraising that you think could be helped by the online world?

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: Well, on the online, no, because what we do are the usual lottery situations that everybody else does—bingo. We do one in particular that other clubs don't do, and we had government put up roadblocks, and that is Texas hold 'em poker tournaments. Government did not like that.

I don't know whether you agree with me or not. I'm a retired police officer. I know there's a direct phone call that goes from the minister's office, here in this building, directly to Orillia to the commissioner's office, and—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): With that, I'm sorry to say, you're out of time. Mr. Singh may allow you to continue, though. Mr. Singh?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Yes, finish what you were saying, sir.

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: We were investigated—I was investigated—by the Ontario Provincial Police over Texas hold 'em tournaments. They went to the crown attorney, and the crown attorney said, "No, I'm not going to prosecute this. This is not against the law."

Yet tomorrow, I can go to the town of Newmarket and I can get a licence to hold a euchre tournament. A euchre tournament is totally illegal by the Criminal Code of Canada. That takes some explanation, and I'd be happy to give it to you any time you want. I can get a liquor licence for that euchre tournament, but I can't get a liquor licence for the Texas hold 'em poker tournament.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you for illuminating some of the complexities of our laws in the province of Ontario. You sound like you have a lot of experience with them. That's good to know.

One of the things you touched on, and my colleague also asked you about, was the AGCO, but you also touched on Trillium and the liquor licence board. Do you want to get into any of those and expand a bit?

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: I'll give you an example of the last time I put in an application with Trillium. Lions Clubs are known for doing eye-testing of children in senior kindergarten in schools. For some reason, the province doesn't require kids entering public school to go to an optometrist and have their eyes examined. They have to go to a medical doctor for a physical exam, but they don't have to have their eyes tested. I don't have to tell you how important that is. However, they don't do it. We have all kinds of children that we find who are almost blind. We find children with cataracts in senior kindergarten who need surgery immediately.

We use an updated instrument. It's digital; it is a fantastic instrument. We made an application to the Trillium Foundation and they said, "This is a wonderful project. This is just great. We didn't know you did this. However, the instrument that you want to buy is a medical device, and we don't fund medical devices."

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Interesting.

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: Why not? It's a great project. It's something that is serving the public. But it's a medical project.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I see. And then with the liquor licence board?

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: Liquor licence: Well, again, the fees that we have to pay—although I have to compliment the government: They did make changes with regard to outdoor events which were long overdue. I congratulate them for finally updating regulations on liquor licences in outdoor premises.

But again, I can get a liquor licence with no problem for a bridge tournament or a euchre tournament or a Monopoly tournament that is totally illegal under Canadian laws, but for our Texas hold 'em poker tournament, which is legal, I can't get a liquor licence because the LCBO considers it to be illegal.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): With that, we're out of time. We have to go to the government. Mr. Dhillon.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Thank you, Mr. Metcalfe, for all the work that your organization does to help our communities.

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Could you tell us a bit about your club's efforts to help people who face barriers? For many, these are physical barriers. Ontario's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act has aimed to reduce these types of barriers. Can you recall any instances in the last decade where your club has benefited from this law?

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: How we've benefited from it? I can tell you what we do about it. We spend money on eyeglasses for the blind, wheelchairs for people who need them, people who fall through the cracks in government programs that don't cover things for people—wheelchairs are a big one. We provide clothing to people who need winter coats. We provide funding for the local food bank. We provide special hearing aids for people who are deaf. Those are people who also have problems with accessibility, because they can't go, they can't see and they can't hear.

But, of course, accessibility is also dictated by laws. The accessibility act affects, I think, more municipalities in how they build and how they structure buildings and whatnot—building codes to allow accessibility to people who have these problems. But any service organization is involved in assisting people with these needs to help access sight, hearing and that type of thing.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Okay. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Dhillon. Thank you, Mr. Metcalfe.

Mr. Richard Metcalfe: Thank you.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL, DISTRICT 7010

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We go to our next presenter, then: Margaret Walton from Rotary International, District 7010. Ms. Walton, I'm sure you've observed the framework.

Ms. Margaret Walton: Yes, I have observed, sir.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Excellent. You may proceed.

Ms. Margaret Walton: I'm Margaret Walton. I'm from Bracebridge. I am the district governor for Rotary District 7010.

I'm going to bring a slightly different perspective. My district is extremely large. Starting at the south end of Simcoe county, it covers Simcoe, Kawartha, Peterborough, Haliburton, Muskoka, Parry Sound, North Bay and Manitoulin. It goes all the way up to Hearst, Chapleau and across into northern Quebec.

I recently toured through the 42 clubs that are part of our district. Our communities are small northern communities and, as Ms. Chantler referred to, often the Rotary Club is the only club that provides service. I'm not going to go through the list of things we provide, because you've certainly heard that in spades, but really, we take care of people who fall through the cracks. We build parks, we do hospitals, we provide services in northern communities that might not be available and then, as we move down through the southern communities, we do the same thing.

Some of the concerns we have with respect to the way the government deals with service clubs—I'm a land-use planner so I certainly understand regulation. I live in it all the time, but some of the regulations have caused major headaches for my clubs.

First of all, the issue of the multiple licences: Ms. Chantler did a good job in speaking to that. We have many small clubs that run small lotteries, and they can't. My club, for example, has always run a car draw and a duck draw. We can no longer do that unless we can find someone else who will hold the licence.

The other one is posting the security for the prize, which is extremely onerous for clubs. Clubs tend to raise their money and spend their money. Having to hold \$50,000 in the bank for a prize is a burden and it means that the size and scale of the projects that they undertake has been reduced.

Certainly the property tax issue—a lot of parks, trails and those sorts of things that were formerly owned by those clubs, they have given up because they can't pay the property taxes. Or they don't want to donate money that they had fundraised for projects to the payment of property taxes.

The other one that is difficult is having to specify what the money from those projects is going to go to, because most clubs need flexibility. Because they respond to requirements in their communities as they arise, they don't always anticipate what is going to come up.

What I'm asking the government for—and I think Ms. Chantler opened the door to quite a number of good ideas

about looking at a tiered system so smaller projects are dealt with differently. Keeping the complexity out—the requirements for paperwork and multiple audits and costs—is really where we're going. We're all doing the same thing: We're trying to make the world a better place to live. The Rotary motto this year is "Rotary Serving Humanity." That's what we do.

I'm just asking the committee to think about it. Look at your regulations, make sure that they're streamlined, that they're consistent, that they don't overlap, that they don't contradict each other, and give us the flexibility that we need to do our job.

It's the same with the food service: Many of our clubs meet in small halls and they can no longer get affordable meals because of the regulations with regards to food service.

Just on a positive note, our district membership is growing.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Excellent. Thank you very much. We go then to the third party. Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you very much. One of the things I've been asking a lot is that I want to know what the impact would be if we were able to do this in a meaningful way. How would this change the ability for these service clubs to do the work they do in the communities? What would be the overall impact?

Ms. Margaret Walton: I think they'd be able to run more events. They would have more flexibility in how they allocate their money. For example, if there's a flood in a community and they need to come up with money, they could use some of the lottery proceeds for that. It would just make it more flexible.

Also, our members like to be creative and innovative. If you allow that in the club and don't bog them down in regulation, I think their service would be more effective.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Just touching on that idea, we've heard from previous members that sometimes a member will come up with an idea and then that idea would get shot down just because there are too many barriers to actually have that idea executed. Would you be able to share something about that?

Ms. Margaret Walton: I think the idea of having multiple licences—currently, we have two Rotary Clubs in the municipality I live in. We had one major draw and then we did two smaller draws. We've given up the two smaller draws because we can't get the licences, so we do one. I think that's the kind of thing that could be changed.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Sure. I appreciate your personal story. Thank you.

Ms. Margaret Walton: You're welcome.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you, Mr. Singh. We go to the government. Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Hi, Ms. Walton. Thanks for being here and thanks for your service. Individual service clubs in different regions may experience different issues. Can you detail any barriers experienced by northern or rural member clubs, those that are in larger communities or smaller communities? I know you have a number of large and small communities.

You did say that your membership is growing, which is wonderful.

Ms. Margaret Walton: Yes. Looking at some of the northern communities—and the clubs there are small. I have one in Gore Bay that's 14 members, but does a tremendous amount of work. They do a fish fry every year for 450 people; it's their major fundraiser. Just dealing with all the foodservice, the requirements, the regulations, and if they want to do a lottery, the paperwork—you think about the amount of work and volunteer hours that go into that. So if we can streamline some of the processes, it would make it much easier.

Also, I was in Englehart the other day, and they have dropped the ownership of a number of public facilities they used to manage because they don't want to pay the taxes that are required as part of that. They transferred it to the municipality and then they lose control of how that project is actually managed, because now the municipality dictates what it wants as opposed to the Rotary Club having ownership of that project.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Don't feel too bad. My club is in Courtice. It's a big area and it's 14 members, give or take.

Ms. Margaret Walton: So you don't want to miss a meeting.

Laughter.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Other than the fish fry, what else do you do for fundraising?

Ms. Margaret Walton: The Rotary Club of Timmins actually does a lot of bar service, so the whole liquor licensing issue and the insurance issue, also, that Ms. Chantler raised is a concern as well, because the cost of insurance is rising, and so more and more people are reluctant. Also, just the burden of serving on volunteer boards with the increasing regulation and the obligations and responsibility those board members take on, which requires legal assistance and accounting assistance, and all of that is costly. I think a lot of our regulation, which supposedly is for the public good, is actually reducing our service sector, which I think is unfortunate.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Do I have time?

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): You have time.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Okay. Speaking of insurance, who requires insurance? What are the requirements?

I'll give you a scenario: In a couple of months or in a month or so, I will be in the Santa Claus Parade, and now I hear that I'm required to purchase insurance. How does that work?

Ms. Margaret Walton: Our district carries insurance for all our clubs. We pay for it and we bill back to the clubs. We have to be insured for all public events.

Mr. Granville Anderson: You have to be? Okay.

Ms. Margaret Walton: Yes, we do. It's a considerable cost, and as Ms. Chantler said, it's a growing cost.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Anderson.

We go to Mr. Coe.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you for your presentation. It was an excellent presentation. Your colleague from district 7070 talked about some of the value that he saw in terms of a single legislative model that would address some of the challenges that he outlined so well, and you did equally. Do you think that's part of the solution to the challenges that you've outlined?

Ms. Margaret Walton: Yes, I do. I respect the committee's job. I think you have a difficult task ahead, to try and find the borders and the boundaries of how we want to work, but I do think an act would work. I think it's really important in Ontario. Service clubs build community and we are losing that ability to do that, so I think a single piece of legislation is probably the way to go.

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Mr. Lorne Coe: Right. The one that Jim spoke about was the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act and it probably being a good legislative framework to proceed, but in combination with some of the checks and balances that already exist within Rotary International. Would you agree with that as well?

Ms. Margaret Walton: Yes, and I think if you look to the organizations—I'm not as familiar with Lions, Kiwanis or Kinsmen—certainly Rotary has a strong regulatory framework on how our clubs act.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I think we can draw on that—

Ms. Margaret Walton: Absolutely. There's a lot of expertise there.

Mr. Lorne Coe: All right. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you. Mr. Wilson?

Mr. Jim Wilson: You probably can't answer this today, but do you know of other jurisdictions—it's helpful for us, if there was, "PEI does it better," or "Nova Scotia does it better." Since you're international and you get chatting with people across the country, do you have any sense of a province that does much better in terms of helping service clubs?

Ms. Margaret Walton: I'm not sure. I have three clubs in Quebec, so it's a slightly different process there. I think they do have some mechanisms there that seem to be a little more effective than we have in Ontario, but—

Mr. Jim Wilson: In order to speed things up, we don't want to reinvent the wheel around here. It'll never get done.

Ms. Margaret Walton: Absolutely not. I'm sure, though, if you could challenge us to take that back, we could get back to you on that.

Mr. Jim Wilson: That would be excellent. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Ms. Martow.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Consider yourself challenged. Okay? Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): With that, we go to our next presenter. Thank you very much.

Ms. Margaret Walton: You're welcome.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL, DISTRICT 7090

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): The next presenter, then, is Marlee Diehl, Rotary International, District 7090. Ms. Diehl? As you have observed, you have up to five minutes. If you would, introduce yourself for Hansard.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, members, and certainly the guests.

Today I am addressing the issue of background checks. There isn't a Rotarian alive who doubts that we need them. Rotary does a really good job of having our harassment and abuse protocols and all the bylaws that go with it. We train our members and we value the time that they spend with us.

These are just some of the people that we interact with and some of the groups. Literacy is huge. Nearly every one of our clubs has a literacy project. Some of them are birth to kindergarten. Some of them are dictionaries. In some of them, they read to the students—and mentoring, career days. SLAPSHOT is where we teach leadership, and if you've ever been to Canterbury Hills in Ancaster and watched those kids up in the trees, you'll understand leadership. Rotaractors—these are all people who need to be protected, and we value that, and we work extremely hard to make sure that that is so.

We have no problem with having a vulnerable service verification. That is just the way it has to be. Where we do have a bit of a problem is the secondary screening that too often comes up. Apparently, it has changed a little bit. I had the benefit of speaking to Sergeant Peter Bailey at the Hamilton Police Service. He was telling me that now it's triggered a lot more. They used to have maybe only two a year. Now they're up to 1,700 a year, and that's out of 27,000 background checks. The problem is that if your gender and your birthdate matches somebody who has had a conviction, especially for a sexually oriented crime—they may even have been granted a pardon—it still will trigger you and you are required to go now to the police station and be fingerprinted. The other, we can do online, but this one, you literally have to take your time and go there.

We require that these checks be done on a regular basis. In fact, if you have that gender and that birthday, you're going to be triggered.

Some 8% of the population has to go for secondary screening. It is an extra expense and extra time that our members have to give. We're fortunate that when it goes to the RCMP, I understand that the RCMP waives any charge; their \$25, they waive. It's done because we're a volunteer organization, and we thank them for that.

I also understand that police services—this is not their core business, and therefore it is a fee for services. But that additional \$25 that they have to pay brings the cost up to nearly \$60. It may be every year for some clubs. Some clubs do it less frequently.

When I did speak to Sergeant Bailey, he came up with a suggestion. That was that as opposed to doing the VSV, the vulnerable sector verification, he suggested that per-

haps we can start using more of the criminal record judicial conviction report, which doesn't trigger, and can't trigger, that secondary.

But this is a bit of a problem, because we can't do our work unless we have a streamlined system where our members can get these checks done and we can maintain our confidentiality of maintaining good records within our organization. It's extremely important and we value your opinion on that.

The thing that really scares me the most: You are right, our memberships are falling down. But if it weren't for Rotary and service organizations doing these projects with vulnerable people and children, who is going to do it?

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Ms. Diehl? I'm sorry. With that, you've run out of time.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: I was finished.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Ah, what a wonderful coincidence. It happens sometimes.

We go to the government. Ms. Mangat.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you, Marlee. You can use my time if you want to finish.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: No, I had finished.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: You did finish? Okay. Thank you.

Thank you for sharing your experience with the committee members. I have an understanding that you have had an opportunity to be a member of Rotary in the States, and in Canada as well.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: That's right.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: My question to you is, can you share with us what are the differences in youth involvement in the province of Ontario and the States? Do they have similar outreach or do they approach it differently? Can you share with us?

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Sure. I can tell you as a past member of the Hamilton AM club and a member of the Albion, New York club that it is much easier to get a background check here in the province of Ontario. Hooray. It is very difficult down there, to the point that my own club does limited youth work or work with vulnerable people because it is so expensive. And we're not talking \$60; we're maybe talking \$125.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Where in the States?

Ms. Marlee Diehl: In New York state.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Okay.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: So very much expensive.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: It's very much expensive. Go ahead.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: That is the whole thing with it. It is so expensive. Their checks are very similar, from what I understand, but it's just the fact that there is so much more paperwork and a much greater expense on it.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Okay. We know that these service clubs are run by members. As members age, we need to recruit more young people. Do you think that Ontario's volunteer hour program in high schools helps service clubs in general with running their programs and recruiting new young people?

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Yes, I do. I think it is very beneficial; plus, Rotary has what's called an Interact program in the high schools, and that really does help teach children about service and about working with those who are in need.

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I know many of us bring in our Interact clubs and their members to help us with projects. That help alone is fostering more growth on their part and is also bringing them closer to joining us when they get—

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: But you didn't answer my question. Do you think Ontario's volunteer hour program in high schools would help as well?

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Yes.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: It would?

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Yes.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): With that, your time is up. We go to the official opposition. Ms. Martow.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Hi. Thank you so much for coming in. I don't think I've ever had to do a background check, but I had to take two of my kids. I mentioned before about working at non-profit summer camps. As soon as they became councillors at the age of 16 or 17, I had to drop them off at a police station. They had to be fingerprinted even.

Our whole family went and got the Nexus and Global Entry cards. You know what that is? When you do the airport screening, you've done the pre-screening.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Yes, I have.

Mrs. Gila Martow: So you're sort of making me think—and I'm going to look into that. Once you've done the Nexus pre-entry, you've been fingerprinted, you've been tested for the airport security stuff—

Interjection.

Mrs. Gila Martow: The iris scan, exactly. You have a number, just like a passport number. I'm going to keep your information and maybe pass that on. I'm going to look into that. So many people now have that Nexus card. It's \$60, I think, for five years. To me, I'm wondering if that's maybe something that we can look into, somehow using that for—I think that's a higher level of scrutiny, to tell you the truth, than what they're even asking in terms of a criminal check, because of Sergeant Bailey.

My question to you is, have you ever had somebody who refused to go for the background check and then just couldn't get involved or couldn't do what you were asking them to do?

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Yes. Personally, I know of somebody who wanted to go reading at the school with me, until I mentioned wouldn't it be great if he did that, and he would have to get a background check. Within 24 hours he said, "No, I don't think so." Sometime later, I found out there was a conviction in his background.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Yes, and sometimes it's something quite small and embarrassing and things like that.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: It was, I think, a one-time indiscretion kind of thing.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Right. Maybe that's something where we have to, again, look at what somebody's doing and what level of scrutiny.

Really, I sympathize, and I'm really interested in looking into that for you.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Thank you.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Anything else that you're feeling, struggling with, that you want to bring up in the next minute or two that you feel is hampering?

Ms. Marlee Diehl: No. I think the biggest thing is that all service clubs have one thing in common, and that is, they want to give back so much to their communities. Anytime they hit a roadblock, after a while, some members, our 20%—you know, that 80-20 rule—these people get knocked down so many times that sooner or later, they say, "You know, I think I'm just going to go to a Bible class instead." They just don't have to pass the test there.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I know that's not our local Rotarians.

Laughter.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): And with that very interesting comment, we go on to the third party. Mr. Singh.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: A residual effect of the humour. Thank you for that.

You touched on this—and many of the folks who have presented touched on this—that we don't want to increase any additional barriers. There's already barriers to getting involved. We know that less and less people are getting involved in their communities, so we want to make it easier instead of making it harder. So I appreciate that.

You've talked about this financial—the time, as well as the complication of how there are so many papers that have to be filled out. Can you maybe quantify the impact this is having on membership? How many people do you think are being turned off from it because it's so difficult and they feel, "This is just too hard for us to do"?

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Well, one of my presidents in one of my clubs actually delineated the time he had spent to get his background check just within the last couple of weeks because he was one of the 8% that was triggered. It's not the first time he was triggered to go and have this done, so yet again he was. By the time he had done it—travelled there and waited and one thing and another and then waited for the results—he figured he had about four hours' time in.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Wow.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Now, for a working person, that's four hours out, but even for us retirees, it's still four hours.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That's a lot of time to do something that you've already gone through once before. It doesn't seem like you need to do it again.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: But we do require it, by our bylaws.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: No, I mean requiring the check—but to have to go through that, just because your

name is triggered, and you know you're not that person—that seems to be such an onerous thing to do.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Actually, believe it or not, according to Sergeant Bailey, they no longer use your name. It is not there. It's only your gender and your date of birth, so that takes out a whole lot of people and broadens who gets called in.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Wow. So it makes it even more difficult. You mentioned the costs associated with it. You mentioned that some folks—like the RCMP—if they know it's for a volunteer or a service group, they waive it. Do you think that maybe some provincial guidelines around that, making sure that if it's a service club—

Ms. Marlee Diehl: That would be wonderful.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Okay.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: I do know that for some clubs in Ontario that go through the Ontario Provincial Police, apparently it is zero, or almost. The only other one that I can state with any certainty as to what it is, is Hamilton, and it is for the initial vulnerable services verification. It's \$36.40. The other is another \$25.

As they explained it, it's a fee for service. It's either that they go to you, the province, to get more officers, or they have to pay outside staff. I understand where it's coming from, but it is an onerous task to try and fix.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Makes sense. Thank you very much for your presentation.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Thank you very much.

Ms. Marlee Diehl: Thank you.

STAYNER LIONS CLUB

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Our last presenter is Mr. John Squire with the Stayner Lions Club. Mr. Squire, you've been here. You've seen the whole process a number of times. If you would introduce yourself, you have five minutes.

Mr. John Squire: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and committee. My name is John Squire. I'm the president of the Stayner Chamber of Commerce, and I'm also treasurer of the Stayner Lions Club. I'm a 30-plus-year member of the club.

We all recognize that all service clubs, whether it be Lions, Kinsmen, Rotary, Optimist etc., are very much needed, whether it be for volunteering time to help other people; the Adopt-A-Highway program; or raising funds for a local community.

In 1988, Stayner Lions gave \$120,000 to the building of our local arena and hall. We've given \$18,000 to the Hospice Georgian Triangle to furnish a room at Campbell House, and over \$100,000 to our local General and Marine Hospital Foundation and to the cancer centre in Barrie. These are just a few of our larger donations.

Through Lions Clubs International, we also help areas worldwide with major disasters. Two years ago, when the tornado hit Angus, Lions International gave money to Angus, and last year, with the wildfires, to Fort McMurray.

All organizations are facing challenges getting members. Young families have different priorities. The cost of living is making it harder for people to volunteer. The cost of our hydro in Ontario is only going to compound this challenge in the future. The added costs of police checks and insurance—these factors make it more difficult to attract volunteers.

Membership fees are paid out of after-tax dollars. I ask that you allow a credit, similar to the volunteer firefighters' tax credit, on personal income tax, or a deduction for membership fees.

Stayner Lions Club's major fundraiser is our annual car draw. I know of three other service clubs in Simcoe county who have similar challenges as we have with licensing. This past year, our draw was a 2016 Ford Mustang. This is our 43rd year. Our club pays \$35,000 for the car to a local dealer, who is very generous and helps with extra incentives. But then we pay 13% on that cost to buy that car, so it's over \$4,500 that is taken away from our profits—profits that we can give our community. I know this tax is made up of both federal and provincial portions—5% and 8%—and I would ask that you consider relief of some kind.

Also, when we apply for our lottery licence, because our prize is under \$50,000, the local municipality can handle the issuing of the lottery licence. However, they are governed by the gaming association. We are restricted to selling in Ontario only, as you've heard before. At one time, we could advertise and sell out of province and over the phone. This restriction has cut 15% of our sales, which we are still trying to recoup locally. An added effect will be this new casino that is going to be coming into our area. There's only so much money to go around. If it's taken out of our community, we cannot get it back to be used in our community.

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Also, the gaming association requires service clubs to provide to the municipalities the value equal to the prize. In our case, we've had to give the township \$35,000 this past year for them to hold—or it could be covered by a line of credit. But financial institutions don't offer lines of credit without some sort of a guarantee. In service clubs or any organization, they don't take \$35,000; you've got 20 members and divide it by 20 so it's \$1,700 each. No, it's \$35,000. Each person has to sign for \$35,000, or the guarantors have to sign for that. A service club is a mix of business people and retirees. This \$35,000 commitment may affect what an individual can do in their business and personal lives. We are volunteers. When it starts to affect how we can live, why volunteer? We need to think about ourselves and our businesses.

I ask that you review the rules, that a separate category be set up for service clubs and that these rules be relaxed.

As I mentioned earlier, I know of three other service clubs in Simcoe county that have the same challenges. Bradford Lions have been going for 75 years; their car draw is 62 years old. Elmvale: 67 years chartered. Their car draw, I couldn't find, but I'm sure—

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Mr. Squire, I'm sorry to say that you're out of time.

Mr. John Squire: Already?

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): I know. Five minutes, it goes so fast. It's a shocker.

Mr. John Squire: I'll say.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We go first to the official opposition: Mr. Wilson?

Mr. Jim Wilson: John, I'm going to give you the time to just finish up so that it's part of the record.

Mr. John Squire: Okay. Well, I'll do it very quick.

Stayner Lions has been around for 60 years; 43 years for our car draw. We are not going anywhere. Help us to be around another 60 years.

I just lost my train of thought. Anyway—

Mr. Jim Wilson: Well, it's very good and it will be—

Mr. John Squire: Anyway, you have my thing that—

Mr. Jim Wilson: It will be entered into the record.

Mr. John Squire: Thank you.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Thanks for the details and thanks for all that you do in our communities.

I've heard this a few times. When did they stop—you remember the days when you could sell tickets over the phone and in other provinces?

Mr. John Squire: We've been selling for 43 years. We've had different levels. We've had trucks. We've had vintage. We started a database with vintage, which was 12 years ago. We sold online; we sold out of province and had various levels of prizes. We had one prize that was won by somebody in Alberta. Another prize was won by somebody down east. Because you publish it online, which is what you need to do, OLG came down and slapped our fingers: "Don't do that anymore, or you will not get a licence."

I know we have not been alone. I know other service clubs have had the same issue. We're not going down there and begging them to buy our tickets; we're offering it and they are approaching us. It just seems, to take that 15% out of our community, which is what it has done—because now we're trying to recoup those sales. All the money that's raised—and in all the service clubs that we've heard here today, the money that is raised is for the community, to help, whether it be minor sports, whether it be hospitals. We have our local hospital that's going to change its location, and they will be coming for money. As was mentioned, the government helps with the building, but it's the equipment that has to be covered some other way.

Mr. Jim Wilson: With respect to membership fees, I envisioned us being able to recommend that, on your tax return, you can put your union dues on, or your association dues. I don't know why we can't do that for service clubs.

I think most people would be shocked—I've known about it because I've been in office a long time—that when you do a Corvette draw or something, the government takes the first \$4,000, \$5,000 or \$6,000 in tax. I think they'd be shocked that that's done and that's not coming back to the community. It's not this govern-

ment's fault; it has been going on for a long time with the tax system. We do make exemptions for other things including, apparently, hydro now, although you don't save much money—but I'll save that for another hearing. So if we can make exemptions, we can make exemptions.

Mr. John Squire: I think hydro, as I mentioned, is going to be an extra burden on our community. It's taking money that—they're going to say, "Well, maybe I don't want to join. I've got to live, so I can't afford to join a club."

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): With that, I'm sorry to say you're out of time.

We go to Mr. Singh of the third party. Mr. Singh?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you so much for your presentation.

Is there anything else that you wanted to add about some of the burdens or the obstacles that service clubs face?

Mr. John Squire: I think they've pretty much been covered. We've heard it many times today—and our club faces the same challenges and the paperwork that the other organizations have to abide by. Although it's repetition, they say the more times you repeat it, the better the chance it gets into your head.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That's great. Thank you so much for your presentation.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): We go to the government. Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you very much for your presentation. I believe you're the last one for the day—save the best for the last.

In your summary, you asked, where would a community be without service clubs and volunteers? You're so right. They're so vital to our existence and to a community, especially in today's society.

You also mentioned that we need to change some rules, which would encourage young people to join service clubs. What rules were you thinking of?

Mr. John Squire: Allowing a tax exemption can help. That's not going to be the be-all and end-all, but it can help with it.

As has been mentioned here, we have to be open to change in order to try to attract them. In our club, I'm

probably one of the younger ones. I know there are some who are younger, but not very many. We need to attract the younger generation in order for any service club to survive.

Mr. Granville Anderson: In addition to members' benefits, what advantages do you feel service clubs have over non-profits that commit to similar objectives?

Mr. John Squire: I'm sorry; I don't quite follow.

Mr. Granville Anderson: What advantage do non-profit service clubs have over regular clubs that commit to similar objectives?

Mr. John Squire: What do you mean by "non-profit"?

Mr. Granville Anderson: There are other clubs that are not service clubs. They're non-profit organizations.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Charities.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Other charities.

Mr. John Squire: Well, our club is not a charitable club. We do not have that designation. As a charity, we have been approached—when you go out into the community, there have been questions about whether they can get a taxable receipt. Sure, those charitable organizations have that advantage, but that's just a limitation we can't do.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Do all Lions Clubs have a dog guide service?

Mr. John Squire: The dog guide foundation is here in Breslau. We all contribute to that foundation. There are various levels, with your Seeing Eye dogs, the autism and various ones. But we contribute to that program.

Mr. Granville Anderson: I think it's a wonderful program.

Mr. John Squire: Yes.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you for your presentation.

The Chair (Mr. Peter Tabuns): Okay. Members of the committee, we've come to the end of our day. I want to thank all the presenters today. We had some very high-quality material. I want to thank members of the committee.

We stand adjourned until 4 p.m. tomorrow, when we resume debate on clause-by-clause of Bill 28.

The committee adjourned at 1650.

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